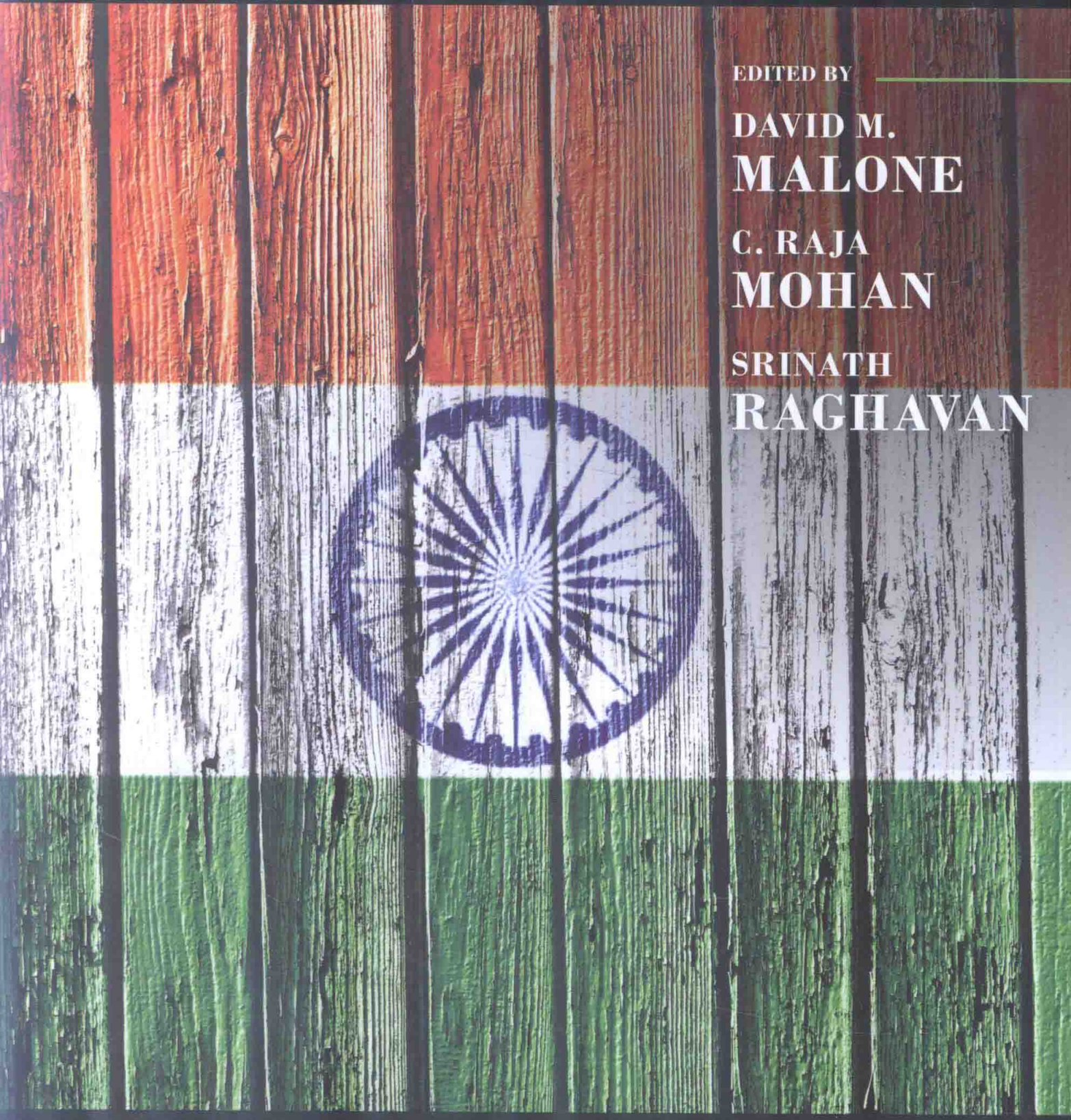

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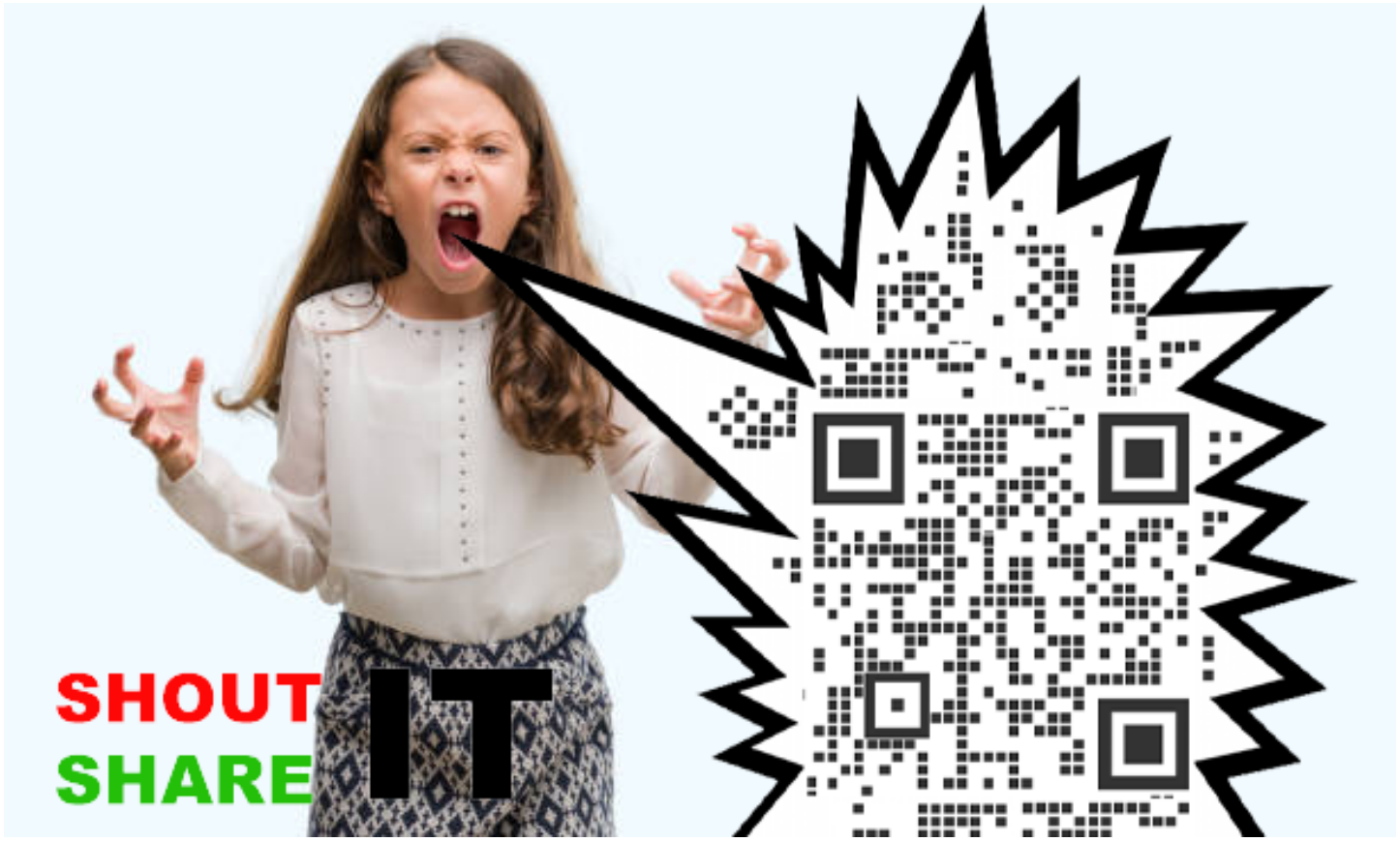
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THE OXFORD HANDBOOK OF

INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY

Edited by

DAVID M. MALONE, C. RAJA MOHAN,

and

SRINATH RAGHAVAN

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D.M.M., C.R.M., S.R.
January 2015

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PART I

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1

INDIA AND THE WORLD

DAVID M. MALONE, C. RAJA MOHAN,
AND SRINATH RAGHAVAN

In mid-2012, Oxford University Press suggested to us that, in view of the growing weight of India in international relations, the time might now have come for a volume devoted to Indian foreign policy in OUP's flagship *Oxford Handbook* series. Each of us had published on aspects of the topic, and we knew that many talented authors, some already well-established, others strong emerging voices in the field, could likely be persuaded to participate in such a venture. So we agreed, with pleasure.

Relevance of the *Handbook* Subject Matter

During the Cold War years, India's international relations swung between a somewhat idealist posture often associated with the country's first Prime Minister (1947–64), Jawaharlal Nehru, and a harder-edged realism favoured by his daughter, Indira Gandhi (1966–77 and 1980–4). Above all, India's international profile was identified with non-alignment in the Cold War and solidarity with still colonized or newly decolonized countries, and more broadly with the plight of developing countries. In the West, India was tarred, often lazily, with a broad brush as moralistic and hypocritical. While this view conveniently ignored serial Western hypocrisies, it is true that much high-minded Indian rhetoric obscured hard realities from Indian eyes, helping precipitate a traumatic border war with China in 1962 and at times exhausting even India's friends. Moreover, in its relations with some immediate neighbours its conduct hardly lived up to the standards India was preaching from global pulpits, such as those of the United Nations. For within the subcontinent, India saw itself as a power and a legatee of the Raj in providing regional security.

The end of the Cold War (particularly during the years 1989–91) forced New Delhi to rethink many of its international assumptions and partnerships. This most dramatic of recent shifts in international relations was accompanied in India by a painful balance of payments crisis inducing important, if limited, economic liberalization. Together these (in hindsight, salutary) shocks introduced a two-decade-long period of evolution of Indian foreign policy not so much in a straight line as in a set of fits and starts often difficult for casual observers of India to follow. Indeed, beyond its own borders Indian foreign policy was as often summarily dismissed as studied or understood.

By the turn of the century, this was no longer the case: the number of scholars and practitioners with in-depth knowledge of India multiplied in Europe, the United States, and elsewhere. Within India, scholarship took a more critical turn, moving beyond nostalgia for the heyday of non-alignment, and analysing—often with great insight—the specificities of New Delhi's relationships, international objectives, and policy implementation. Country and regional expertise, always present in the Indian academic world, began to acquire critical mass. In consequence, the range of views and community of interested Indian and foreign scholars and practitioners interacting with each other grew significantly.

Thus, over a period of a quarter of a century, a more mature field of scholarship and a more diverse, frequently expert, set of chroniclers and analysts of Indian foreign policy emerged. This development was encouraged by growing interest in India as both a fast-growing market and a potentially meaningful regional and global power. Indeed, the real, if modest, shifts in Indian economic policy allowed the country to expand on the already healthier economic growth rates achieved during the 1980s (in the 4–6 per cent range) to the electrifying 7–9 per cent range in the mid-2000s. India, along with China, Brazil, and South Africa—soon followed by countries such as Indonesia and Turkey—were suddenly seen as 'emerging' rather than as economically challenged. Indian hands within the business world, academia, and officialdom were suddenly in demand.

To be sure India suffered considerably from the back-draught of the transatlantic economic crisis of 2008 and its economic growth rate slowed down considerably. Coupled with New Delhi's growing paralysis in the second term of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh (2009–14), the story of India's rise looked shaky. The impressive electoral victory in 2014 of Narendra Modi renewed interest in and optimism for India's growth and international salience. We hope this volume will help inform and stimulate (and at times moderate) this current wave of enthusiasm for India and its international importance.

How We Proceeded

A volume of this size and ambition is best not undertaken in a great hurry. We were, above all, determined to secure for it the best possible authors for the chapters we commissioned. And we were keen to encourage a conversation among them. For this reason,

and thanks to the generous funders of the project, we were able to convene from all over the world a gathering of our authors in New Delhi in January 2014. This large, convivial meeting among students of Indian foreign policy proved invaluable to the cohesion of the volume. The dialogue between editors and authors was a particularly rich one for the editors as we proceeded. Draft chapters underwent several revisions, in order to distil the essence of topics that have often merited full-volume-length treatment. The authors, of course, do not always agree with each other, but as a result of the 2014 meeting, they may have a better sense of the reasoning of those others present.

Situating This Volume in the Literature

In Chapter 2, Kanti Bajpai offers a rich essay on the relevant literature. Jawaharlal Nehru, who had been reflecting on a foreign policy for independent India since the 1920s—and who whiled away considerable time sampling the hospitality of His Majesty's gaols over the decades—looms very large over the formation of the country's foreign policy as of 1947.

A number of Indian practitioners added to his ideas through their own interpretation of India's actions in memoirs and other writing. Since the late 1960s when India turned inwards, its academic links with the rest of the world began to diminish. This was due in large part to scarce foreign exchange for travel and other means of intellectual exchange. The centralization of the higher education system and the imposition of politically correct values saw the constriction of space for vigorous scholarly debate on international relations and foreign policy. Consequently, Indian scholars tended towards explicating and extolling official positions on international relations rather than questioning them, as noted by Amitabh Mattoo and Rory Medcalf in Chapter 21.

In search of balance and insight, Indian historians have occasionally cited contemporary foreign observers of India from the 1950s and 1960s, who published fond but often quite critical scholarly memoirs. One such work is Escott Reid's *Envoy to Nehru*, written many years after his departure from New Delhi in 1957, where he had served as Canada's High Commissioner for five years. Likewise Australia's Walter Crocker, who served twice as High Commissioner to India, wrote a much admired appraisal, *Nehru: A Contemporary's Estimate*, recently reissued with a foreword by the accomplished Indian historian Ramachandra Guha.

Academic scholarship on India's foreign policy took a more independent turn from the 1990s, falling into two broad categories: those writing abroad (often Indians or of Indian extraction), generally from within well-funded leading universities and think-tanks; and those in India, often working in much more difficult circumstances—featuring punishing teaching loads, poor working conditions, disappointing libraries, archives inadequately curated, or, confoundingly in the case of the Nehru papers, mostly closed

to scholarly scrutiny at the behest of the Nehru/Gandhi family. The turn of the century also saw a greater awareness within the international relations community of the need to revitalize the discipline in India by strengthening old institutions and building new ones (Alagappa 2009).

It is, today, very much a field dominated by Indians and those of Indian extraction. Some of those writing abroad won considerable respect and acceptance within India several decades ago, particularly when writing about India's security dilemmas, including their regional dimensions and responses thereto. Others were sometimes too conveniently disregarded in India as sniping and unworthy critics. More recently, with India very much à la mode, the quantity and quality of Indian scholarship have expanded significantly, particularly in the United States and the United Kingdom, offering economic, geostrategic, regional, and country-specific analysis, with new centres of excellence emerging elsewhere on India's foreign policy. Singapore as well has developed into a pole of attraction for India scholars. Australia also hosts excellent research on India. All of this is good to witness, if bittersweet at a time when India's own universities are undermined by a range of ills. However, scholarship on India's international relations still lags far behind that on China's.

Within India, scholars of great distinction moving beyond the early framework of India's international relations, defined largely by non-alignment and its implications, have tended to specialize on regional and sometimes on bilateral relationships. Several of these are also represented in this volume, notably on important, under-analysed relationships, such as Nepal (S. D. Muni, Chapter 29), Sri Lanka (V. Suryanarayan, Chapter 30), and Israel (P. R. Kumaraswamy, Chapter 39).

The last Indian survey on the model of this one of which we are aware is a monumental, authoritative volume edited by Atish Sinha and Madhup Mohta in 2007, *Indian Foreign Policy: Challenges and Opportunities*, and handsomely published by the Indian Foreign Service Institute (Sinha and Mohta 2007). Its excellent authors (two of them, Talmiz Ahmed and C. Raja Mohan, reprise, on different topics, in this book) were nearly all practitioners of scholarly bent, whereas in this volume, most are full-time scholars, many with a strong interest in policy.

Writing on India's international economic relations has also greatly increased, in the media as well as in academic works. Think-tanks based in New Delhi, but also elsewhere in India, as well as international ones, have produced high-quality writing on India's international economic relations and on India-related bilateral and multilateral trade issues.

Relations with the most important powers or those most neuralgic for India (China, the United States, and Pakistan) have attracted a great deal of attention within India and abroad. We were fortunate to attract to our project Alka Acharya (Chapter 26), Ashley Tellis (Chapter 35), and Rajesh Basrur (Chapter 27) respectively on relations with China, the United States, and Pakistan. Each dissects India's complex, often vexed, sometimes tortuous relationships with these countries.

Just as the United States and Britain feature much literate and acute newspaper, periodical, and journal writing on international relations, so does India. It is home to

a thriving and highly profitable media industry, notable for its often sensationalist but equally often compelling writing on international relations (and entertaining television commentary, which sometimes veers knowingly into the theatrical), much of it in English. Several of our authors (Sanjaya Baru, Chapter 24; Devesh Kapur, Chapter 22) and one of the editors (C. Raja Mohan) bestride the worlds of scholarship and media commentary.

Kanti Bajpai points out in Chapter 2 that India's international relations have been under-theorized. One exception to the paucity of theory might be found in the work of American scholars given to geostrategic perspectives on India's international relations, whose constructs Indian policy-makers quite stubbornly resist. Younger scholars of the field will doubtless fill the theoretical near-void on our topics in the years to come, as done in Chapter 3 of this volume by Siddharth Mallavarapu.

One of this volume's most welcome revelations, at least to the editors, has been the flowering of a talented younger generation centrally or tangentially focused on Indian foreign policy, including, in this volume, Rahul Sagar (Chapter 5), Pallavi Raghavan (Chapter 6), Andrew Kennedy (Chapter 7), Rohan Mukherjee (Chapter 13), Rani Mullen (Chapter 14), Paul Staniland and Vipin Narang (Chapter 15), Rudra Chaudhuri (Chapter 16), Tanvi Madan (Chapter 17), Latha Varadarajan (Chapter 21), Jaideep Prabhu (Chapter 23), Emilian Kavalski (Chapter 31), Kudrat Virk (Chapter 40), Constantino Xavier (Chapter 41), Poorvi Chitalkar (Chapter 42), Jason Kirk (Chapter 44), and Lavanya Rajamani (Chapter 48). Thus, the field is almost certain to prosper and grow in years ahead, both inside and outside India.

Our Construct

The foreign policy of any country is shaped, powered, and constrained by three major factors: history, geography, and capability. To these we add leadership (both its presence and force, but also at times its absence).

Another factor that has been accorded prominence in the literature on foreign policy-making is identity. Yet the question of identity is also analytically elusive. India's national identity is shaped by the values of the Enlightenment adapted and improvised in the context of its own history. The ideals underpinning the Indian Constitution, for instance, harken to those of the Enlightenment: human rights and democracy, constitutional government, and commitment to public reason. Indian democracy may be a work in progress, yet it is deeply embedded in its identity.

To what extent does the idea of democracy shape India's foreign policy? In its international engagements, India has demonstrated a strong commitment to the ideals of democracy. Yet India has also refrained from making democracy promotion an objective of its foreign policy. For instance, on the question of human rights versus sovereignty, India has refrained from taking an a priori stand deriving from its own identity. This stance stems from a variety of factors. For one thing, India evolves in an

unstable neighbourhood where democracy's hold is tenuous. Ensuring stability and coping with threats require engaging with regimes that may not meet democratic benchmarks. For another, India's own experience with democracy underlines how difficult it is to embed its ideals in deeply unequal and hierarchical societies. India is well aware of the need to temper ideological zeal. Finally, India seems to believe that it can best help advance the cause of democracy as well as its own interests by realizing its own tryst with democracy. Pratap Bhanu Mehta writes: 'India certainly has a sense that the greatest source of its power in the world will be the power of its example. If it can successfully handle its deep internal pluralism, maintain a vibrant democracy, and sustain decent rates of economic growth, it will automatically acquire a certain stature and even perhaps pre-eminence in global councils' (Mehta 2011: 106).

In short, the influence of India's identity on its foreign policy can only be understood by locating it in the concrete terrain of history, geography, capability, and leadership.

History

In the case of India, history explains a good deal of its foreign policy, not just in the immediate post-independence period, but even today. Although fragmented through most of the last three millennia into many smaller polities, the subcontinent did witness the rise and decline for brief periods of powerful empires covering most of present-day South Asia; for example, under the Maurya (322–185 BCE), Gupta (320–550 CE), and the Mughal (1526–1857CE) dynasties. In the modern period, India gradually became a unified territorial entity under the British Raj. Its location at Asia's crossroads and its peninsular projection into the Indian Ocean made it a natural transit point, and destination, of international trade across its vast overland frontiers and along both its Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean coasts. Throughout its recorded history and as evidenced in archaeological digs, the Indian subcontinent traded far and wide. Connection with the reachable world was a constant for India from very early on. Influence and invasions tended to flow into India from the west (or north transiting through the west), while India's cultural and wider influence largely travelled east, inter alia through the spread of Buddhism, Hinduism, and Indian trading communities, leaving stupendous remains from a thousand or so years ago in countries as far afield as modern-day Indonesia.

India's capacity to absorb foreign visitors, invaders, and influence is evidenced in many ways. For example, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Ethiopian warrior slaves were adopted into the Deccan plateau's hierarchy of power. The great Mughal dynasty, one of several to sweep into the Gangetic plain from the east, itself sought to adjust to India while India adjusted to it. For a time, it must have seemed to the British colonists in India as of the eighteenth century that they too had been

accepted into India's natural order, albeit as the country's overlords, but they were wrong, as the mutiny of 1857 and the subsequent emergence of political resistance to their rule demonstrate. While the British Raj tends to be remembered with a touch of nostalgia in the West, its legacy in India was far from an unalloyed blessing. The Raj laid the institutional bases of a modern state and sought to integrate India with the global economy, but its economic record was at best mixed, its administrative performance frequently feckless, and its political stance deeply and permanently divisive.

The colonial experience profoundly shaped post-independence India and its foreign policy, breeding lasting suspicion of Western hegemony (no longer led by Britain, but by the United States) and predisposing Nehru towards a model of import-substituting industrialization in a public sector dominated mixed economy.

At the same time, the Raj also left a different legacy for India. It incubated an Indian elite steeped in the values of political liberalism, which under the leadership of Nehru, built one of the earliest most successful democracies outside the West. Much like the Raj, which emulated the Mughal Empire in many ways, independent India incorporated many institutions left behind by the Raj, including the armed forces and a bureaucracy, which in turn included a diplomatic corps. The Raj's construction of a territorial India and the pursuit of its geographic interests, not always coincidental with those of London, established the foundations of a regional policy that encompasses such notions as the geopolitical unity of the subcontinent, the claim for security interests stretching from Aden to Malacca and beyond, and an opposition to the meddling of other powers in and around the subcontinent. These continuities in independent India's foreign policy ran parallel with those such as anti-colonialism and solidarity with the peoples of the Afro-Asian world, inherited from the national movement.

The circumstances of the British departure from the subcontinent left a bitter legacy for independent India. (Sneh Mahajan in Chapter 4 discusses some of the complexities of the Raj legacy.) The territorial partition of the subcontinent along religious lines leading to the creation of Pakistan to its west and east produced a poisoned legacy of hostility and a contested territory (in Kashmir). This led, subsequently, to three full-scale wars, one of them in turn partitioning Pakistan and ushering into existence an independent Bangladesh to India's east. While many of India's Muslims migrated to Pakistan (with many Sikhs and Hindus abandoning what became Pakistan for India), a roughly equal number of Muslims remained in India. While India adopted and emphasized a secular identity, Pakistan emphasized its Islamic one, creating diplomatic challenges for India with other Islamic countries, which for many years reflexively supported Pakistan in votes at the United Nations and elsewhere at times of dispute with India—although much less so today.

Thus, while India's ancient civilizations and much of its early history constitute a soft power asset for India, its history over the past three centuries has produced much unhappiness and struggle, which India started outgrowing convincingly only with its economic success of the past thirty years. However, many challenges left behind by

colonial rule, notably the enduring poverty of hundreds of millions of Indians, remain at best only partially addressed.

Geography

Although India is to a degree cut off from its neighbours by the towering Himalayas and by its extensive coastline and the seas beyond, its neighbourhood is a tough one, marked by competition and conflict. To a large extent conflict is avoided, but tension occasionally degenerates into military confrontation or pressure—most notably with Pakistan. China's annexation of Tibet in 1951 produced for it a lengthy border with India (left ill-defined at the time of India's independence although charted out to a large degree by the British), interrupted by Nepal and Bhutan, both sandwiched between the Asian giants.

In India's mind, Afghanistan is a close and important neighbour, even though territorial contiguity was extinguished in 1947 with the creation of Pakistan and loss of the northern areas of Kashmir in the 1947–8 Kashmir conflict. Afghan governments since then have sought support from India to strengthen their own sovereignty and independence, often threatened by Pakistan.

Bangladesh (Chapter 28 by Sreeradha Datta and Krishnan Srinivasan) and Myanmar also share land borders with India. Across the seas, India considers Sri Lanka and the Maldives close neighbours, and they also are members of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation. And the distant, small, but prosperous island state of Mauritius, the population of which is mostly of Indian origin, located much closer to Africa than to India, also enjoys a special relationship with India, akin to a neighbourly one.

As discussed throughout this volume, India's region has been one of the unhappiest and most conflict-prone in the world, featuring three nuclear-armed states (China, India, and Pakistan), a characteristic which may ultimately be stabilizing but is also deeply worrying should technical or political mistakes involving nuclear arsenals be made by any of these parties. Even with Nepal, whose border with India is essentially an open one, relations have been unequal and tense much of the time (Chapter 29 by S. D. Muni). In fact, sustained good relations have existed only with Bhutan and distant Mauritius.

Beyond these often fractious immediate neighbours, India's extended neighbourhood includes Iran and the Persian (or Arab) Gulf—whose states under British protection were overseen during the Raj from Delhi rather than London. To the east, several countries of South-East Asia, including Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia as well as Myanmar, have strong historical and contemporary links with India, most vividly evident in Malaysia and Singapore through large and vibrant Indian diaspora minority communities. More generally, India's large and entrepreneurial diaspora (Chapter 21 by Latha Varadarajan) extends India's sense of connection to the shores of Africa, to the Caribbean, and to other lands as distant as Fiji, all places at least somewhat imprinted

by the flavour of India. With Saudi Arabia and the sheikhdoms of the Gulf fast developing their countries, large Indian diasporas from Kerala in South India and elsewhere provide some of the mid-level professional and much other labour required by the ambitious infrastructure and wider economic plans of these countries. India's growing energy demand is met by ever-expanding energy imports from the oil-rich Middle East and has led to strong economic interdependence with the region.

During the early decades of India's independence, the unanticipated need to fend off the Cold War became New Delhi's top priority and Nehru's early conception of India as above all an Asian power slumbered. But since the early 1990s, New Delhi has increasingly built substance into a 'Look East' policy initially focused mainly on South-East Asia, but today extending equally to East Asia, notably Japan, South Korea, and Australia. These Asian nations are seen in Delhi as important strategic and economic partners in a fast-changing region marked by China's insistent rise.

India also sees itself closely linked by history and sympathy with Central Asia. Indeed, several dynasties that briefly ruled India issued forth, sometimes with breath-taking ferocity, from this region, as Tamerlane's onslaught in North India of the late fourteenth century, in the footsteps of similar depredations by Genghis Khan's armies in the thirteenth century, reminds us. But, as Emilian Kavalski argues in Chapter 31, while the relationship with Afghanistan is in many ways and at many levels organic, India's ties with the Central Asian countries, while welcomed by them, are dwarfed by their links with Russia and China. In Afghanistan and Central Asia as a whole, India's reach and influence are significantly constrained by lack of overland geographic access, thanks to the enduring conflict with Pakistan.

Capability

A country's capability depends on a number of factors, but none is more important than the health and dynamism of its economy. On this score, until the 1980s, India's record was pretty dismal, with some exceptions. At independence, India accounted for less than 2 per cent of global wealth, with 345 million people to provide for. While the colonial state had integrated India into the first wave of globalization and fostered some industrialization, it hardly made a dent on—and may well have deepened—levels of poverty. While India made considerable advances in the decades after independence, there is no denying its relative economic decline in the world, with its share of the global gross domestic product (GDP) and trade steadily diminishing after independence until the 1980s.

When the British started their expansion into India in 1700, the country then would have accounted for 24–5 per cent of global production (Maddison 2003; Washbrook 2007). Maddison estimates that in 1700 the United Kingdom's GDP amounted to little more than 11 per cent of India's. By 1947 it exceeded India's by half. Looked at another way, Maddison's calculations suggest India's GDP per capita remained essentially flat

during the 200 years that the United Kingdom dominated India, while the United Kingdom's GDP per capita increased fivefold.

Thus, Nehru and his colleagues in 1947 faced a very bleak picture. With India's population continuing to grow, and the country remaining highly dependent on food aid and sales from the West, principally the United States, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi launched a 'green revolution' in the late 1960s and 1970s that greatly increased grain production. However, the medium-term costs of this policy have returned to haunt India, a result of unsustainable use of water and the over-use of fertilizers, which have depleted its aquifers and degraded soil quality. Indeed, as Navroz Dubash and Lavanya Rajamani argue in Chapter 48 on climate change, India will be increasingly constrained by self-inflicted environmental blight, including air quality among the world's worst in some of its major cities.

The early 1970s represent the high water mark of economic *dirigisme* in India. When returned to power in 1980 after an interval in the political wilderness following her ill-conceived emergency rule (1975–7), first Indira Gandhi, and then her son and successor Rajiv Gandhi, undertook modest liberalizing reforms that increased the Indian growth rate significantly during the 1980s. The decisive turning point in economic policy came in 1991 with limited deregulation, privatization, tax reform, and greater openness to external trade and foreign investment. These were to reap lasting benefits until the transatlantic economic crisis as of 2008 and policy paralysis during the second terms of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) coalition (2009–14) conspired to reduce growth to a level of 4.7 per cent in 2013 and early 2014 (from highs in excess of 9 per cent only a few years earlier).

It is tempting to argue that Nehru's great rhetorical skills and the more hectoring ones of his chief foreign policy adviser and spokesman in the 1950s, V. K. Krishna Menon, were all the more godsent as India could afford nothing more. Indeed, the weaker India's capabilities became, the more high-minded its international posture seemed to become, although, as argued by Andrew Kennedy in Chapter 7 on Nehru's foreign policy, an element of realism was always present. This became more pronounced under Indira Gandhi who subjected India and the world to a sharp dose of realpolitik, mostly rooted in India's defeat during its border war with China in 1962 and its relative international isolation at the time of its 1971 war with Pakistan. Nevertheless, a constant until quite recently was India's weak capability to implement significant international ambitions, even had it been moved to formulate them.

India's feeble condition at independence might have been overcome more rapidly with a different economic model. But this is not the whole story: its social policies and politics revolved around distributive programmes that rarely delivered fully for the poor in India. Indeed, policy in a number of fields has been confused and contradictory. In this volume, Ligia Noronha (Chapter 12) makes a strong argument that India's dependency on foreign markets for energy supplies is greatly aggravated by its failure to make the most of domestic supply. Likewise, as noted by Sumit Ganguly (Chapter 11), India's often large weapons imports are necessitated by the failure of much of its defence industry to

provide high quality output, which stands in contrast to successful nuclear weapons and space programmes (the former discussed by Jaideep A. Prabhu in Chapter 23).

In the 1990s India's private sector came into its own (Rajiv Kumar in Chapter 18). In the realms of information technology and outsourced services, Indian firms showed themselves capable of competing with the best globally. The Indian private sector also boasts a number of highly successful business empires, including the Tata family of companies and Reliance Industries. Many of these companies, such as Mittal Steel, succeed better outside India than within, and not surprisingly so, given the burden of bureaucracy and corruption that those primarily focused on India must endure. In virtually every sector, over-regulation and regulatory abuse provide opportunities more for graft than for achievement of their purported public purposes. The reforms of 1991 ultimately did little to mitigate the abuses of the 'licence Raj'. Whether India's new government under Narendra Modi, which campaigned vigorously on a platform of economic reform and development, is able to tame both the Indian regulatory impulse and the voracious appetite for rents of so many in public life (including the leading political parties whose election campaigns are among the world's most expensive) remains to be seen.

One further component of capability is worthy of mention here—that of human resources development. Indians for at least a decade have inclined to believe that the country's youthful population will produce the trump card in its competition with a rapidly ageing China. This is not at all clear. The standards of education in India, at every level from primary school to university, are among the most depressing in the world. Thus, the demographic boon could readily turn into a demographic bomb of under-employment and instability unless the country can not only create more and better jobs but also fill them with better-qualified staff. A failing public education system (which coexists with some strong private establishments, but a larger number of private scamsters preying on an often under-informed public convinced that any private education will help their children) is not turned around overnight. Recent decades have produced remarkably little innovation and, if anything, a decline in standards, particularly in rural areas where in excess of 60 per cent of the population still lives.

Leadership

Two Indians stand out globally as among the twentieth century's most appealing leaders: Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (known as the Mahatma, and unrelated to the Prime Ministers of that name), who was assassinated in 1948, and thus does not appear much in these pages, and Jawaharlal Nehru. Other than their high degree of education and professional achievement, these men had little in common. Gandhi, while driving an ever-widening movement to free India of the British over a 40-year period, never exercised government responsibilities nor sought to. Nehru, a UK-educated patrician, was Gandhi's choice to lead the independent country. He had schooled himself for this function, reading and writing voraciously. Rahul Sagar in Chapter 5 reviews ideas about

foreign policy before independence, many of them Nehru's. Constantly, through his speeches, he sought to educate the people of India, including, somewhat quixotically, on foreign policy. Like many remaining in power over extended periods of time, he came to believe too much in his own instincts, contributing to the debacle of the 1962 war with China, which may have hastened his early death in 1964.

Just as Gandhi was the incarnation of the drive for decolonization until 1948, so Nehru picked up the mantle, advocating passionately at the United Nations, in the Commonwealth, and elsewhere for those still under the colonial yoke, while helping to shape the notion of non-alignment to assure a margin of manoeuvre for poor countries in the unforgiving climate of the Cold War. While he irritated some counterparts in the West, it is hard to argue today that his foreign policy could have been much improved upon, not least given India's straitened circumstances. Himself of high-caste Kashmiri origins, he may have been too attached to that magical corner of the world to drive hard enough in the late 1940s towards a settlement with Pakistan on this bone of contention between the two countries, which has grown ever harder to resolve as its contours have hardened into multi-generational grievances. But his outlook, overall, was generous and his service to the nation, protean.

It was his daughter, Indira, who succeeded him as Prime Minister after a two-year interval under Lal Bahadur Shastri, who ran up against the limitations of genuine non-alignment when electoral outcomes in Pakistan in 1970 led to crisis. By early 1971 it precipitated fierce repression in East Pakistan and the flight of many of the latter's residents to India. These, in turn, late in the year, provoked war between India and Pakistan and the consequent independence of Bangladesh. Pakistan, by now firmly allied with both China and the United States and commanding considerable international sympathy in its attempt to maintain territorial integrity against the separatist ambitions in East Pakistan of Mujibur Rahman's Awami League, was a clear beneficiary of multiple alignments. India, while frantically seeking to draw attention to the unfolding massacres in East Pakistan by the country's army, had no allies until Indira Gandhi signed a Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation with Moscow, thus securing India's flank for the battle soon to come.

A fierce combatant for India's corner, Indira Gandhi gained some admirers internationally, but made few friends for India. India's first nuclear test in 1974 alarmed much of the world, and led to a form of purdah for India among nations endowed with nuclear technology. The lofty principles she espoused publicly seemed an ill fit with such episodes as the incorporation of Sikkim into the Indian Union in 1975. If the international reaction to the integration of Sikkim was negative, especially from China, nationalists at home saw it as cleaning up some of the territorial ambiguities left behind by the Raj and unattended by Nehru. Indira Gandhi's undemocratic instincts culminating in emergency rule (1975–7) further undermined her international reputation. Somewhat chastened by her domestic come-uppance in the 1977 elections, and perhaps also by a fast-evolving international scene with Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher holding sway in partnership as of 1981, she seemed to be attempting wider international outreach in the years leading up to her assassination in 1984. Internationally, even the fact that

her chief antagonists were Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger, at his least attractive in his dealings with India, as well as Maoist China at its most radical, never did much to further her own appeal internationally. Nevertheless, she remains wildly popular among her own people as a leader who 'stood up for India'. Surjit Mansingh in Chapter 8 provides a wide-ranging assessment of her foreign policy.

No subsequent leaders rivalled Nehru and Indira Gandhi on the world stage. Mostly they borrowed rhetorically from each of these predecessors while doing their best to manage the manifold and complex interests of India in its fraught Asian setting. Rajiv Gandhi championed the fight against apartheid but also launched a poorly conceived and ill-fated military intervention in Sri Lanka under the guise of peacekeeping between 1987 and 1990. Srinath Raghavan in Chapter 9 reflects on the impact in foreign policy of this transitional figure who, in some ways, was more than that—for many of the major diplomatic moves that would transform India's foreign policy in the 1990s and 2000s, for example towards the United States, China, and Israel, were first initiated by Rajiv Gandhi, who was willing to break out of the straitjacket of the Indira years.

Of his successors after 1989, Narasimha Rao (1991–6) stands out as having engineered India's overall fairly deft response to the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, skilfully dropping some old policies, while initiating others, for example the establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel, as discussed by P. R. Kumaraswamy in Chapter 39. Inder Kumar Gujral, better known as an engaged Foreign Minister twice in the 1990s, but also Prime Minister for a year late in the decade, consistently championed more generous relationships with India's neighbours under the so-called Gujral Doctrine.

Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Prime Minister in 1996 and again from 1998 to 2004, first government leader of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), while leading a coalition and party significantly more nationalist than any previous Indian administration, proved a skilled hand both at engaging Pakistan and dealing in a highly controlled and ultimately effective manner with a risky militarily venture which Islamabad launched stealthily against Indian-held territory at Kargil in 1999. Notably, he empowered two strong foreign ministers (Jaswant Singh and Yashwant Sinha) and his national security adviser, Brajesh Mishra, who raised India's international profile during the BJP's years in power, as discussed in C. Raja Mohan's Chapter 10 on Indian foreign policy since 1990.

The two Congress-led coalition governments of 2004–9 and 2009–14 will be remembered above all for the delicate and controversial dance engaged between 2005 and 2008 by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh with the administration of US President George W. Bush to secure an agreement on cooperation in the field of civilian nuclear energy. This required a change in the United States's domestic non-proliferation law and the international rules of atomic commerce. While Bush saw it as a political move to remove one of the major contentions in the United States's relationship with India, non-proliferation groups in the United States and around the world decried it as a needless concession to Delhi that would undermine the non-proliferation regime. In India, conservatives in the establishment saw it as a potential Trojan Horse. When ultimately accepted by the Indian Parliament, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the

Nuclear Suppliers Group in Vienna, and the US Congress, all in 2008, this potentially game-changing breakthrough released India from its more than three decades of isolation from the global nuclear order. However, most nuclear cooperation with India by international suppliers ground to a halt in the wake of a sweeping Civil Nuclear Liability Act passed by the Indian Parliament in 2010 in response to agitation arising from the lack of adequate compensation from the Union Carbide Company (and its successor company) for the Bhopal chemical disaster of 1984. The provisions of the Act which imposed excessive obligations on the nuclear suppliers were sufficiently onerous as to discourage further international involvement in India in the nuclear energy domain. Rajesh Rajagopalan in Chapter 47 discusses the contradictory nature of India's advocacy of nuclear disarmament since the 1950s while latterly developing nuclear weapons capacity and then the weapons themselves.

Emulating its BJP-led predecessor government in the case of Kargil, the UPA coalition responded cautiously at the international level to the surprisingly effective attack against Mumbai by a small group of terrorists in November 2008. So ineffective was the reaction to the attack of various Indian security forces that Indians seemed as enraged with their own government as with Pakistan from which the terrorists had travelled by sea. As had the Vajpayee government over Kargil, so the Singh government allowed this potentially explosive situation with Pakistan to be managed internationally by the United States (and to some extent the United Kingdom).

During Dr Singh's years, India's international profile grew in tandem with the country's economic success. New Delhi, particularly through the voice of Finance Minister P. Chidambaram, articulated a strong claim by India to a greater role in global governance (through the multilateral institutions of which it is a member). This was achieved to a certain extent with the creation of the Group of 20 (G20) at leader level in response to the 2008 financial crisis, and by the creation of a set of new plurilateral forums such as the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa), in which India played a central role, and to which our volume devotes a thought-provoking essay by Samir Saran in Chapter 45 and also some paragraphs in Chapter 42 by Poorvi Chitalkar and David Malone on India and global governance. But, perhaps due to a collapse of coherence or resolve of the government during the years 2009–14, little of substance was achieved in securing formal recognition of India's growing international status, for example the creation of a long-sought permanent seat for the country in the UN Security Council.

Manu Bhagavan in Chapter 43 discusses the (once-central) importance of the UN for Indian foreign policy, while Jason Kirk in Chapter 44 addresses India's growing voice and growing frustrations within the international financial institutions (IFIs), whose efforts at governance reform that would enhance New Delhi's role have been proceeding at a glacial pace. Pradeep Mehta and Bipul Chatterjee in Chapter 46 document India's distinctive profile and often sharp dissent within the World Trade Organization (WTO), which, for now, have been maintained by the new Modi government. India has, for some years, been impatient with the existing world order, but it and other emerging powers have been unable to achieve much change even in the wake of the economic slow-down centred mostly on Western countries since 2008.

India's position on an issue of critical importance in the multilateral agenda at the time of publication, climate change, is considered by Navroz Dubash and Lavanya Rajamani in Chapter 48. While recognizing the need to act on the issue domestically, it has, to date, maintained a firm position advocating deep cuts in the emissions of the industrialized countries as fulfilment of their historic responsibility for high levels of greenhouse gas emissions and financial support by them for efforts by developing countries to limit the growth of their own in the future. Whether this position will be sustained or modified in the run-up to the Paris Summit on climate change in 2015 remains to be seen.

With the arrival in power in 2014 of the BJP, the country's new Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, playing against expectations, launched a charm offensive vis-à-vis neighbours, including Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. He radiated intent to see India prosper, not least due to greater international investment and trade. That the international ambitions and achievements of the previous government were so slight only helped in establishing an early contrast of style, while the growing relevance globally of India also helped overcome concerns in some Western capitals, including Washington, about Mr Modi's record during his controversial first term as Chief Minister of Gujarat.

Some institutions and actors beyond governments and their leaders also matter to the formulation of foreign policy and its implementation. The state itself and its politics are at its centre. In India, democratic processes play a role and officialdom attends foreign policy from start to finish. The private sector (assessed by Rajiv Kumar in Chapter 18), the media (whose influence Manoj Joshi dissects in Chapter 19), public opinion (Devesh Kapur in Chapter 22), and economic actors and pressures all weigh in as well.

Key Relationships

The unhappy lot of editors is to have to make choices, in order to keep collective projects like this one manageable for readers and publishers. This responsibility came into focus most sharply for us when, having dealt with history by assigning chapters to a number of authors, and the imperatives of geography by doing likewise on neighbouring states and the Indian Ocean (with Chapter 34 on the latter by David Scott), we moved on to relationships that matter to India beyond its immediate vicinity. Some, like the United States, Western Europe (on which Christian Wagner writes in Chapter 36), and the Russian Federation (addressed in Chapter 37 by Rajan Menon) were obvious. On others, we required some consultation among ourselves. We ultimately provided for two chapters on India's relationships with Africa (one of them focused solely on South Africa), one by Varun Sahni on Brazil (India's most important relationship within Latin America, although others, including Mexico and Chile, also stand out), and another on Israel (having dealt with the Persian Gulf states, including Iran, as part of India's extended neighbourhood in Talmiz Ahmad's Chapter 32).

New Delhi's relationship with Tokyo has, particularly since the election of Shinzo Abe as Prime Minister of Japan in 2012, been intensifying, in part as a result of tectonic shifts under

way in Asia related to the accelerated rise of China. China and India are the continent's heavyweights in terms of territory and population, but Japan is the world's third largest economy and thus should matter critically to any Indian policy towards Asia. Surprisingly, the trade and investment figures between the two countries are underwhelming and the recent impetus in the relationship so far remains mainly political and geostrategic. This could change if India becomes more assertively welcoming to foreign investment.

While Abe went out of his way to cultivate relations with India when first Prime Minister in 2006–7, and picked up again with Manmohan Singh where he had left off, the relationship, to the extent that it hinges on individual leaders, should receive a further fillip from the pre-existing close ties of Abe with Narendra Modi over many years. Ultimately, we included Japan in the 'Look East' chapter of Amitav Acharya rather than commissioning a stand-alone chapter, partly because a separate project is under way, involving several of us and our authors, on the bilateral relationship with Japan.

Structure of the Volume

Weaving all of these strands together in a cohesive way has not been easy. Critics will point out that we have overlooked this important relationship or that key issue in India's international relations. But mostly, they are featured in the book, often in cross-cutting ways. We tried to ensure this was so by organizing our potentially overwhelming material under five broad headings, after two initial chapters which set the stage in terms of study and thinking on the field:

- History, or the evolution of Indian foreign policy over seven decades and influences thereon from earlier periods (Part II). This section contains seven essentially historical chapters, and several others addressing important cross-cutting themes that arose often in our debates: national security; the role of, and constraints imposed by, natural resource requirements; India's own development programme, and elements of foreign policy projection onto several continents of the world and a number of multilateral bodies; and soft power in Indian foreign policy.
- Institutions and actors (Part III): the state and politics; India's democratic model as a factor in foreign policy formulation and implementation; parliament; officialdom and the private sector; the media, think-tanks, universities, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (as well as certain prominent individuals with careers across several sets of institutions); the Indian diaspora; public opinion; certain key scientific enclaves relevant to foreign policy; and economic imperatives.
- Geography (Part IV): India in the South Asian subcontinent; relations with China; Pakistan; Bangladesh; Nepal; Sri Lanka; Afghanistan and Central Asia; the Persian Gulf; Asia more broadly (under the heading of 'Looking East'); and finally the Indian Ocean, which many of India's partners and potential rivals share.

- Key partnerships (Part V): the United States; Western Europe; the Russian Federation; Brazil, Israel; South Africa; and Africa more widely.
- Multilateral forums and diplomacy, a world within which India has long played an important role, but within which it yearns for greater recognition (Part VI). This latter dynamic is dealt with, first, under the heading of India and global governance; then, the United Nations; the IFIs; new plurilateral forums involving India; the World Trade Organization (and international trade and investment more generally), multilateral bodies dealing with nuclear issues; and negotiations on climate change.
- In a brief concluding section (Part VII), we asked two major scholars of India with an interest in its foreign policy, Sunil Khilnani and Eswaran Sridharan, to look ahead.

We might have sliced and diced our rich subject matter differently, and perhaps should have, but we hope our structure makes a strong argument for itself.

Envoi

Because India is very much on the move, the wide-lens snapshot that this volume provides will doubtless date somewhat in the years ahead. We have sought to guard against obvious risks in this regard by avoiding a focus primarily on recent events and epiphenomena.

It is for this reason that the election of the BJP-led government in May 2014 and the foreign policy of Prime Minister Modi are mentioned only in passing. This is not to dismiss Mr Modi—far from it. His electoral focus on the need for greater Indian economic connection globally, as well as in its own neighbourhood, has been widely welcomed internationally. And his electoral commitments to clean up India's scandal-infested politics and to reform its hopelessly counter-productive regulatory regime and culture, while a tall order, are likewise music to ears abroad. During the election campaign, he adopted a broadly secular tone, and his earlier muscular nationalism was not so much in evidence. Further, to the extent that a degree of nationalism features at the heart of his electoral appeal, he will find himself in good company in Asia, with both of India's most important partners on the continent, China and Japan, also espousing nationalist themes and (at times) policies.

But we are fairly confident that the primary themes of this volume on India's foreign policy, reflected in the structure of the volume and its main arguments, will remain relevant in the foreseeable future. This is in part because India, even when on the move, generally moves slowly, and in part because the imperatives of history, geography, and capability evolve very slowly or not all—although our interpretation thereof often changes over time.

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CHAPTER 2

FIVE APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY

KANTI BAJPAI

PROTRACTED conflict (or 'enduring rivalry') refers to a pattern of serious contention between two or more countries over a long period of time, punctuated by military crises and war (Paul 2005). If so, India–Pakistan and India–China are cases of protracted conflict, especially India–Pakistan. India–US relations have never come close to hostilities. Nevertheless, India's relations with the United States have been marked by a very long period of serious contention over a number of issues. This chapter argues that India's protracted conflicts have been understood largely through five interpretive lenses—sovereignty, alliances, power asymmetry, political values, and domestic politics—of which the sovereignty lens is perhaps the most important.

Indian foreign policy (IFP) is an enormous field of scholarly publishing. To summarize the various approaches exhaustively would be impossible. The aim here is to cull out and present a stylized version of influential lines of interpretation, which are often more implicit than explicit in the writings on the subject; it is not to analyze exemplar texts or bodies of work cohering around a particular issue area of IFP, at least in part because there are few if any seminal texts and core intellectual puzzles which organize the field. This approach risks simplification, even a degree of caricature. On the other hand, it helps identify more clearly some key intellectual tools and trajectories by which Indian foreign policy has been studied.

THREE PROTRACTED CONFLICTS: INDIA–PAKISTAN, INDIA–CHINA, INDIA–UNITED STATES

A survey of India's leading International Relations (IR) journals, *India Quarterly* (*IQ*), *International Studies* (*IS*), and *Strategic Analysis* (*SA*) suggests that conflict with

Pakistan, China, and the United States have dominated the field of study.[1] The three journals published articles by Indian and foreign scholars, though mostly the former. Between 1945 and 2010, the three journals were published approximately 800 times. On a rough estimate, they featured some 4,500 articles, of which 1,000 related to IFP. Table 2.1 summarizes two periods of publishing—the Cold War (1945–89) and the post-Cold War period (1990 onwards).

Table 2.1 suggests the following. First, India–Pakistan, India–China, and India–US relations plus India–rest of world (ROW) together account for 45–68 per cent of all IFP articles. Second, articles dealing with the Pakistan, China, and US relationships together amount to 20–39 per cent of all IFP articles, depending on the journal. Third, articles dealing with broad principles and practices including the historical and philosophical roots of India's foreign policy are a distant second to relational studies. Fourth, nuclear and security policy do even worse than general foreign policy studies except in *SA*.

That a major focus of IFP studies is India's relations with Pakistan, China, and the United States is not surprising. Relations with all three quickly became contentious

Table 2.1 Publications on Indian foreign policy in *India Quarterly, International Studies*, and *Strategic Analysis**

Subject areas	*India Quarterly* 1945–89	*International Studies* 1959–89	*Strategic Analysis* 1977–1989	*India Quarterly* 1990–2008	*International Studies* 1990–2010	*Strategic Analysis* 1990–2006
India–Pakistan	9.0	10.0	17.0	5.7	7.5	6.0
India–China	14.0	24.0	6.5	4.7	10.7	5.0
India–US	12.0	4.6	12.0	9.3	9.6	9.0
India–ROW	23.0	29.0	20.0	38.0	26.0	25.0
General foreign policy and non-alignment	18.0	15.0	2.7	10.0	8.6	5.0
Nuclear policy	4.8	2.8	16.0	4.7	5.4	14.0
General security/ defense	4.8	1.8	21.0	9.0	12.0	35.5
International/regional institutions	8.0	4.6	–	6.5	9.6	2.6
Indian Foreign Service–organizational issues	2.0	1.8	4.3	–	1.0	–
Overseas Indians/ non-resident Indians	4.0	1.8	–	2.8	–	–
Foreign economic policy/India in world economy	–	4.6	–	8.4	9.6	1.4

* There were issues unavailable to me in both periods. The number of missing issues, though, is not very large. There is no reason to expect that the trends indicated by this table would be changed by a fuller count of the journals.

Note: The figures in the cells represent the percentage of articles published in a given subject area. Columns may not add to 100.00 with rounding.

after 1947. In the case of Pakistan and China this led to war; in the case of the United States, it turned India into a quasi-ally of the Soviet Union. Relations with all three remain contentious, even if New Delhi and Washington have mended fences. India's conflicts with its two neighbors and the United States are puzzling since Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru attempted to befriend the three powers and sought to position India as a constructive internationalist power. Why then did India find itself, by the late 1950s, and thereafter for much of the Cold War and post-Cold War period, in conflict with Pakistan, China, and the United States?

Five Interpretations of Conflict

India's conflicts with Pakistan, China, and the United States have been understood through the prism of five interpretive lenses: sovereignty, alliances, power asymmetry, political values, and domestic politics. Indian foreign policy studies rarely rely on a single lens; nor, usually, do they make their interpretive stances explicit. However, over a large body of writings, it is possible to disentangle five viewpoints.

Post-Colonial Sovereignty

India's quarrels with Pakistan, China, and the United States are first of all deeply related to concerns about territory, nationhood, and independence of decision-making. None of India's other relationships are quite so marked by these concerns. In spite of global, regional, and national changes over the past seven decades, India's foreign policy remains preoccupied with threats to territorial integrity, a preferred conception of nationhood, and control over economic, domestic, and foreign policy. Pakistan, China, and the United States appear as the greatest challenges to all three.

Depictions of the India–Pakistan conflict usually begin with the quarrel over Kashmir. Kashmir is the original feud that has persisted beyond the war of 1948, and the inability of India and Pakistan to end the feud has left the two countries in a permanent 'state of war' (Koithara 2004: 28–33). While there is a large literature on the former princely state's accession to India, the history of its integration within India, and the rise of disaffection and militancy since 1989, why Kashmir is such a point of contention remains an open question. It is arguably no great prize economically, and even its strategic importance is a debatable one: India well might be more secure defending itself in the plains than in the hills and valleys of Kashmir.

Perhaps the most widely held view is that from the beginning, powerfully shaped by Jawaharlal Nehru, Indians have come to see the state as being part of the map of India and as vital for its sense of nationhood. This 'cartographic imagination' of India and the construction of nationhood around the inclusion of Kashmir have taken powerful hold.[2] For India, Kashmir is a symbol of secular nationalism. Its inclusion in India affirms the

view that Muslims can be happy and secure in a Hindu-majority nation. For Pakistan, by contrast, Kashmir is symbol of religious nationalism. Kashmir substantiates the view that Muslims in the northwestern part of the subcontinent are part of a larger Muslim nation and must be free of Hindu domination (Ganguly 1995; Varshney 1991).

These two opposite views are inextricably intertwined, and it is impossible to say which came first—the Indian or the Pakistani attachment to Kashmir. Since India controls most of the state, attention has usually focused on Pakistan's role in instigating conflict. Building on Myron Weiner's insight into irredentism as a key variable in international conflict, Sumit Ganguly has suggested that the Kashmir conflict arises from Pakistani irredentism (Weiner 1971; Ganguly 1995). That Pakistan is the unrequited claimant and the instigator of conflict is the dominant view, but India's stakes in Kashmir are clearly a part of the problem (Varshney 1991).

What Kashmir is to the India–Pakistan conflict, Tibet and the border quarrel are to India–China relations—original causes of conflict that continue to influence the course of the relationship. Here too territory, conc eptions of nationhood, and sovereignty are at the heart of the issue. Just as Kashmir's accession is a contested issue, so in the case of India–China the validity of the Johnson Line and MacMahon Line and the status of Tibet remain points of sharp difference (Garver 2001: 3–109). While India makes no irredentist claim on Tibet, the Indian sense of kinship with and responsibility towards Tibetans and the refuge accorded the Dalai Lama are regarded with deep suspicion in China.

The attachment to territory is made more intense by Indian and Chinese post-colonial nationalism. Both countries entered international society in the late 1940s with a powerful sense of victimhood in relation to the West. It is difficult, given this historically engendered deep structure, for either side to regard the border quarrel as susceptible to simple territorial adjustments (though China has in the past proposed a pragmatic 'exchange' deal on the border involving Aksai Chin for Arunachal Pradesh). Western rule and domination in effect entailed loss of control over territory; with independence both India and China were resistant to once again losing control of 'their' land. Any alienation of territory would have suggested that the two governments were not committed to territorial integrity and a complete sense of nationhood and sovereignty. This would have struck at the legitimacy of the Congress Party and Communist Party, both of which had come to power on the promise of emancipation from foreign rule (see Miller 2013 on the Indian and Chinese sense of victimhood).

So also, the attachment to sovereignty has affected how the two regard Tibet and the Dalai Lama's presence in India. The writings on India–China relations show clearly that India feels it has a degree of responsibility towards Tibetans and, under international law, is obliged to give refuge to the Dalai Lama and his followers. China on the other hand feels that India has no *droit de regard* whatsoever on Tibet and that hosting the Dalai Lama and his followers is a form of intervention in the affairs of China (on India–China–Tibet, see Garver 2001: 32–78).

India's relations with the United States, too, are marked by concerns relating to post-colonial sovereignty, and this features quite prominently in accounts of their interactions since 1947. While the two countries are not in conflict over territory, on the

Indian side there has always been considerable resentment over America's stance on the status of Kashmir which is seen as favoring Pakistan. More importantly, though, at independence India quickly came to harbor deep anxieties about India's ability to withstand US power and influence (Kux 1993: 51–7; Chaudhuri 2013: 25–47). In 1947, India cast off colonial rule only to enter a world dominated by the United States. As British imperialism waned in the 1950s, the United States came to be seen in India as a neo-imperial power, one that would constrain India's external policies, intervene in regional conflict, and meddle in its domestic policies. To this day, India has not altogether lost its fear of US imperialism, even if the extent of Indian fearfulness has diminished.

In short, one approach to understanding Indian foreign policy, at least in respect of its three greatest grand strategic challenges, is to comprehend the country's deep anxieties over threats to territory, nationhood, and independence of decision-making.

Alliance Pressures

A second set of arguments about India's protracted conflicts relates to the effects of alliance politics, particularly in the early years of the Cold War, which deeply structured its view of Pakistan, China, and the United States.

The alliance perspective on India–Pakistan relations suggests that the two countries quickly became captive to the structural logic of the global bipolar conflict which coincided and became entangled with the regional bipolar conflict, causing the latter to be magnified. In this view, the differences between India and Pakistan after 1947 could have been resolved—indeed were close to being resolved—if US military aid and Pakistan's membership in US-led alliances had not intervened to exacerbate South Asian differences. Indians came to fear that the Pakistanis were using their Cold War alliance against India and thus balked at solving the Kashmir dispute; and the Pakistanis saw no reason to compromise on Kashmir given US arms and diplomatic support. India's answer to this was to try to convince Islamabad of the advantages of non-alignment and bilateral negotiation, to wean the Americans away from Pakistan, or to line up allies (or quasi-allies) of its own, such as the Soviet Union, to counter Pakistan's Cold War alliances (see Mehta 2008: 103–30, 163–76, 249–313).

After the Cold War, Pakistan predictably became less important for the United States. However, the events of September 11, 2001, made it the United States's most important 'non-NATO ally'. Once again the United States's interests and policies profoundly affected regional politics, ostensibly to Pakistan's advantage and India's disadvantage. With US aid pouring in and with Washington urging India to negotiate with Pakistan in the interest of regional stability, Islamabad was able to bring an extra-regional balancing power back into South Asia even though the Cold War was now over.

The India–China conflict, too, has been traced back to the Cold War, the struggle between the two blocs, and a contest between the Asian giants for global leadership. By the late 1950s, non-aligned India had developed fairly close relations with both the United States and the Soviet Union. China on the other hand was deeply opposed to

the United States and had broken with the Soviets. From Beijing's point of view India was part of a Cold War gang-up that included the two superpowers. The 1962 war and subsequent rivalry has been described as part of a larger Cold War struggle, with Beijing choosing in the end to attack India in order to show that non-alignment was futile, that the Soviets' emerging tilt towards India was misguided, and that peaceful coexistence between the East and the West was a delusional project (Guha 2011: 55). By 1971, China had changed sides in the Cold War, allying now with the United States against the Soviets. India in response allied with the Soviets against a United States–China–Pakistan combine (Raghavan 2013: 108–30). Thus, by the early 1970s, the India–China conflict had been complicated by alliance preferences.

The Cold War is over, but India–China relations can still be seen from the perspective of a larger geopolitical struggle, with China on one side, the United States on the other, and India as a potential partner of one superpower against the other. In this view, the border quarrel between India and China appears as a secondary issue, the real concern in New Delhi being the larger geostrategic triangle that has formed over the past decade and whether to choose sides or be non-aligned (for the latter view, see Khilnani et al. 2013).

Perhaps the dominant view of the India–US conflict is that it arose out of the Cold War and the imperatives of alliance politics. India under Nehru had decided quite early not to take sides between the Western and Communist blocs. While the term non-alignment came later, the basic idea of staying away from alliances predated India's independence (Chaudhuri 2013: 17–23). The aversion to alliances was premised on the hardheaded strategic premise that opting for one alliance system would attract the hostility of the other. Alignment with one side might provoke the other to undermine India from within, by stoking domestic dissent. India was particularly concerned that tilting to the West would antagonize Indian communists at a time when India was attempting to build a democratic order, and tilting towards the Soviets and its allies might alienate the Indian right wing.[3]

India's aloof attitude towards the United States was based not just on the calculation that alliance commitments would earn India the ire of one side or other in the Cold War. There was also India's dislike and suspicion of great powers per se: it had after all lost its independence to a great (Western) power and had only just, after a lengthy struggle, got rid of that power from its shores. As for the United States, it presumed that India, as a former British colony, would more or less automatically side with the West. The United States also felt that New Delhi's rejection of the Western alliance was foolish if not politically immoral (Kux 1993: 126–44). When India stood by its insistence on non-alignment, Washington sought allies elsewhere including in neighboring Pakistan, which with its 'martial race' tradition looked a good partner militarily and strategically. Pakistan was attractive for other reasons too, namely for its Muslim credentials which might help the United States and the West with the oil-rich Islamic world (Kux 1993: 105–15). The United States's siding with Pakistan because of its alliance imperatives only intensified India's fears of America.

After the Cold War, India continued to remain suspicious of the United States. There were a number of reasons for Indian suspicions—US non-proliferation policy, its

human rights crusade, Washington's post-9/11 rapprochement with Pakistan, amongst others—but a recurring theme in the analysis of India's policies towards the United States has been a sense that there is a geopolitical context that conditions New Delhi's choices. India fears that the United States will gravitate once again to a Pakistan–China partnership (against terrorism, for example) or to a US–China condominium in Asian and global affairs (see Raja Mohan 2012: 240–2, on the G-2).

In sum, Indian foreign policy choices with respect to Pakistan, China, and the United States can, and have been, understood through the lens of Cold War alliance and post-Cold War alliance politics, an alliance politics in which India's greatest fear is the United States allying with Pakistan and/or China to the detriment of Indian interests.

Power Distribution(s)

A third view sees the distribution of power between India and its three interlocutors as being the key to understanding Indian foreign policy. Between India, on the one hand, and Pakistan, China, and the US, on the other, there exist asymmetries of power that have profoundly affected New Delhi's dealings with Islamabad, Beijing, and Washington.

In the power asymmetry view, the India–Pakistan conflict arises from the regional power structure: until 1971, in population, land area, and GDP, India was four times bigger than Pakistan; after the creation of Bangladesh, it was eight times bigger. Given the disparity of power, Pakistani rulers have an incentive to 'borrow' power from non-regional powers—first the United States, then the United States and China, even other regional powers and blocs such as Iran and the Muslim world—and to use conventional military strategies and asymmetrical means such as insurgency and terrorism to resist India and refuse to negotiate seriously. T. V. Paul argues that India is bigger than Pakistan but not big enough to compel Pakistan to do its will and that Islamabad has used alliances, nuclear weapons, and non-conventional military strategies to compensate for India's overall power advantage (Paul 2005). The power imbalance erbated conflict, given that differences between India and Pakistan have been magnified and become more dangerous since 1971. India's role in the creation of Bangladesh was seen by Pakistanis as New Delhi's way of permanently 'cutting Pakistan down to size'. Islamabad's response was to develop nuclear weapons, to ally itself more closely to China in particular, and to exploit India's vulnerability in Kashmir when the time came which culminated in a series of crises (1986–7, 1990, 2001–2) and eventually war (1999) (Chari et al. 2007).

As with India–Pakistan, conflict between India and China can be traced to the distribution of power—but also of status—except in this case India is the weaker party. While there was rough parity in the early years, since the late 1980s China has steamed ahead of India, and today is estimated to have a GDP 4.5 times the size of India's. This gap might suggest that India would be subdued by China. Yet, Indian policies since the late 1990s suggest otherwise. The widening power gap may have instigated India to

respond—to go nuclear in 1998, to strengthen its military, to reform its economy, and to cultiv ate strategic partnerships in Asia including most importantly the United States (Malik 2009: 182–9). India's response to the power gap is reminiscent of Pakistan's response to India, except that India has not resorted to asymmetric strategies against China—though Beijing might well argue that hosting the Dalai Lama and Tibetan refugees is a latent if not actual asymmetric strategy.

How has the distribution of power thought to have affected India–US relations? India and the United States came into conflict as Indians came to look upon the United States as the primary imperial power after the Second World War. The Cold War only confirmed India's suspicions that the United States was the power more to be feared: it was clearly the stronger and more crusading power as well as less sympathetic to the concerns of the emerging post-colonial world, seeing the containment of communism as more central to world politics than emancipation from colonial rule (Kux 1993: 47–57). Even though New Delhi favored non-alignment, it in fact tended to look upon the Soviet Union and its allies with greater favor—a tilt that was to persist throughout the Cold War and through virtually all of the international crises of the period. The United States's support of Pakistan's case on Kashmir, its alliance with it, and after 1971 its alliance too with China meant that the United States was ranged against India in a much more direct sense. In New Delhi's view, US policies in Korea, Vietnam, and in various other theaters of the Cold War were symptomatic of American imperialism. India's vociferous opposition to these policies in turn alienated US opinion. The asymmetry of power may not have been the origins of the divide with the United States, but it caused India to fear the United States and to see virtually everything Washington did as arrogant and malign; in turn, given its superiority in power, the United States tended to see India as a supplicant or as an upstart.

Conflict over Political Values

India's conflicts with Pakistan, China, and the United States are also portrayed in terms of differences in political values. In the case of Pakistan, the argument is that the roots of conflict are not just territorial but also political and are to be found in Congress Party–Muslim League differences over the organization of the subcontinent. The Congress view of a secular, united India stood in opposition to the Muslim League's notion of a separate Islamic homeland for Muslims and eventually the Pakistani insistence on an Islamic if not theocratic state (Ganguly 1995; Cohen 2013). The conflict between the two countries is often described as a continuation of this fundamental difference over the relationship between religion and the state, a point of contention that has only deepened with the rise of Islamic conservatism and extremism in Pakistan. The reification of this struggle is 'India versus Pakistan'.

Another political fault line that affects the relationship is India's view of Pakistan's praetorian politics. A constant thread running through accounts of India–Pakistan interactions is the dominance of the military in Pakistani politics and the effects

of praetorianism on bilateral ties (Koithara 2004: 92–5). One formulation is that India–Pakistan conflict is chronic because the Pakistan army has played a pivotal role in keeping the India threat alive, at least in part because of its corporate interests (Parthasarathy 2007: 634–40). With the rise of extremism and terrorism in Pakistan, the argument over political values has taken a slightly modified turn, namely, that these two phenomena—the mixing of religion and politics, and the undue influence of the military which for its own corporate interests supported Islamic extremism—are leading to the collapse of the Pakistani state, with serious consequences for Indian security (Khilnani et al. 2013: 43).

Where India–Pakistan conflict has been portrayed as arising from differences over the role of religion and of the military in politics, India–China conflict has been ascribed to differences over pluralist democracy and authoritarian one-party rule as the basis for statehood and development in Asia. For Indians, China's success with a one-party *dirigiste* state stands as a powerful challenge to the anarchic, pluralist democratic system that India has chosen; and for the Chinese, India's experiment with democracy raises uncomfortable questions about why China cannot be more democratic. Both countries see themselves as beacons for Asia and regard their political way of life as being a surer pathway to security and well-being. If this view is correct, then the India–China conflict goes much deeper than a territorial dispute, and its resolution can only occur when one side is converted to the other's view or if one ideology or the other stands vindicated by the choices of other Asians, that is, by history (Garver 2001: 110–37).

While India and the United States do not have a territorial quarrel that pitched them against each other, India–US contention has been traced back to a foundational difference, related to their broad political stance on development. India under the Congress Party favored economic development led by a strong developmental state which, via central planning, would allocate scarce resources more efficiently than the market (see Johnson 1982 on the notion of the developmental state). The Congress philosophy was a socialist one in which the state would occupy the commanding heights of the economy to foster rapid growth and to bring about social justice through entitlements and redistribution. As the years went on, India favored an autarkic, import-substitution view of manufacturing, and it shunned foreign investment.

The United States, on the other hand, argued for a development strategy based on the market's allocation of resources, a capitalist economy in which private business dominated, social justice through growth and social mobility, and receptivity to trade and investment. The difference in development philosophy would not have mattered except that it came to affect US development and aid policy, India's stance on the workings of the global economy, and New Delhi's view of Washington's geopolitical objectives. The United States appeared not just as a military superpower but also as an exploitative capitalist power (Brecher 1968: 300–4; Kux 1993: 68–72).

A fourth perspective, then, on India's protracted conflicts is that it was not sovereignty, alliances, and power asymmetries but rather differences in political values that resulted in chronic suspicion and friction with Pakistan, China, and the United States. Interestingly, value differences continue to complicate India's relations. India regards

Pakistan's Islamicization with deep foreboding, is in tacit competition with China's strutting authoritarianism, and remains suspicious of US-led globalization.

Domestic Politics

Fifth, there is a view that the domestic politics of India, on the one hand, and Pakistan, China, and the United States, on the other hand, have deeply structured their mutual interactions in largely negative ways.

The clearest argument along these lines is the weak states argument as applied to India–Pakistan—that it is the weakness of Indian and Pakistani institutions and organizations which has prevented them from reaching rational, win-win solutions (Paul 2010: 3–27; Bajpai 1995; on India as a weak state, see Malone and Mukherjee 2010). A related argument is that when they do reach seemingly rational solutions, weak leaderships and institutions lack the legitimacy and authority to sell agreements to key domestic constituencies, and this has perpetuated if not deepened conflict between India and Pakistan. A third argument is that ruling groups in weak states are tempted to blame each other for their internal troubles and to use—if not to create—conflict to legitimize their rule. In India, Jawaharlal Nehru and to some extent Indira Gandhi presided over relatively strong institutions, had the legitimacy and authority to sell agreements, and were strong enough politically to avoid demonizing Pakistan beyond a point. In Pakistan, Ayub Khan in the early years of his rule and Zulfiqar Bhutto briefly after 1972 were perhaps similarly placed. Since then neither country has had leadership of sufficient stature to negotiate a final settlement of any of their mutual conflicts.

There is a view that, like India–Pakistan, India–China conflict also arose from domestic exigencies and as a function of weak state behavior at critical moments. Thus, the cause of the 1962 war has been traced to domestic political pressures on both sides: to Nehru's buckling to public opinion by hardening his stand on the border and instituting the Forward Policy; and to Mao's desire to solidify his internal position after the disaster of the Great Leap Forward (Raghavan 2010: 284–304). After the departure of Indira Gandhi and Deng Xiaoping from the historical stage, neither side seems to have had leadership strong enough to negotiate a final settlement. With the rising tide of nationalism in both countries and the growing influence of electronic and social media, the chances of a settlement seem even more remote. India's leadership, assailed by the media, public opinion, opposition political parties, and think-tanks, is often portrayed as particularly lacking in the ability to carry through agreements that might entail any loss of territory to China.

India's tempestuous relationship with the United States, too, has been explained by domestic politics in the two democracies. In the case of India, a fairly deep-seated anti-Americanism took root in the intelligentsia, bureaucracy (especially the Indian Foreign Service), Congress Party, media, and public opinion. Indian anti-Americanism has been attributed to various factors including the United States's preference for Pakistan and later China during the Cold War, all manner of perceived slights and

insults from US leaders and opinion makers, the cultural condescension that Nehru and his daughter felt for America, the left-of-center aversion for the West and capitalism, and the fear that US intelligence agencies were interfering in Indian politics (Rotter 2000 deals with the cultural-ideational divide).

Anti-Americanism in India was matched by anti-Indian feelings in the United States. Accounts of India–US relations show that here too the Cold War played a role, with India's non-alignment and Third Worldism, its criticism of US external policies, and its tilt towards the Soviet Union playing negatively with American opinion including in the White House, Congress, key bureaucracies, think-tanks, media, and the public at large. Cultural antipathy also played a role. Americans were repulsed by what they regarded as the spirituality and disorderliness of Indians and dismayed at India's poverty and violence (Bajpai 1999; Rotter 2000: xiii–xxiv, 1–36). At the height of the Cold War and in the aftermath of the Korean War, Harold Isaacs, in his comparative study of American images of China and India, found that Americans were decidedly more attracted to Chinese than Indian society (Isaacs 1958).

In authoritarian political systems, these kinds of negative images may not have constrained decision-makers, but in open pluralist democracies they affected policy, especially so in India where it is virtually impossible to support a strong relationship with the United States. This remains the case, despite the fact that over the past decade surveys of Indian opinion have revealed consistently favorable opinions of America (Schaffer 2009: 14–15). By contrast, politicians, the bureaucracy, and the media all continue to harbor deeply mixed views of the United States—admiration and friendship but also resentment and suspicion.

Conclusion

The study of Indian foreign policy has been dominated by writings on India's relations with Pakistan, China, and the United States. India–Pakistan, India–China, and India–US relations have been conflict-ridden over a very long time—a confounding and perplexing result for Indian policy-makers who had sincerely hoped that as a newly-independent country India would take its place as a constructive member of international society. The literature on India's conflicts with Pakistan, China, and the United States suggests that these conflicts can be understood in terms of five common themes or approaches: an original and unresolved quarrel around sovereignty; alliance dynamics; power asymmetries; differences in political values; and domestic politics.

This raises the question of which is the best interpretive lens by which to understand India's protracted quarrels. Any one of the approaches might account for India's conflicts—a classic case of what methodologists call 'over-determination'. With the opening up of official archives particularly in the West but also in China, and to a lesser extent with access to oral records and documents in India, it may be possible to produce detailed and careful histories of the three relationships which would help settle

the interpretive question. A new wave of archive-based Indian foreign policy studies is making its appearance and heralds just such a development (Raghavan 2010, 2013; Chaudhuri 2013). More likely than not, though, social reality being complex, a stance of 'analytical eclecticism' will probably be more fruitful (Katzenstein and Sil 2008 argue the case for eclecticism), and these various interpretations will need to be woven together in a rich tapestry of understanding. The new historical scholarship in Indian foreign policy studies already suggests that a layering of several different interpretive approaches will produce better understanding.

Thus, the various interpretive stances could be deployed to help us understand the nature of conflict over time. Take the India–Pakistan case. The origin of the conflict is in the contention over Kashmir, an elemental quarrel over territory, nationhood, and sovereignty. With the coming of the Cold War, India's desire to stay away from alliance relationships had the ironic effect of embroiling it in alliance politics: non-alignment alienated the United States, which sought out Pakistan, and the evolving US–Pakistan relationship added to India's differences with its neighbor. Almost from the beginning but certainly when the UN-led Kashmir process failed to deliver a solution and later still after the Bangladesh war, the power asymmetry between India and Pakistan led Pakistani leaders to enter into ever-deeper military and diplomatic partnerships, first with the United States and then China—which only made matters worse with India. In time, the differences in political values between India and Pakistan added to the widening gulf between the two societies. Finally, as conflict persisted and deepened, and as leaderships in both countries weakened, neither government was able to push negotiations on Kashmir (and other bilateral quarrels) to successful completion.

A deep post-colonial attachment to sovereignty, Cold War alliance politics, and the power asymmetry produced a seemingly unbridgeable divide. Yet if India and Pakistan had evolved more compatible ideas about the proper constitution of political life, and if they had produced strong second- and third-generation leaders and resilient institutions, they might have settled their quarrels and lived in peace and harmony. Instead, their political values diverged, and they were left with weak leaders and weak institutions—and a protracted conflict that ramified and has endured. A similar if less negative story could be told for the India–China and India–US relationships.

The power of original quarrels to structure India's relations with these three powers merits more attention in Indian foreign policy studies. At the heart of these quarrels are concerns about sovereignty—that is, about control over territory (with Pakistan and China) and over economic, domestic, and foreign policy (with the United States). India's 'hard' view of sovereignty is not just at the heart of its relations with Pakistan, China, and the United States. It is at the heart of its foreign policy more generally. Not surprisingly, India resists international agreements and arrangements, including bilateral and regional ones, that require a loosening of control over what happens within its boundaries. And it continues to take a conservative view of humanitarian intervention and climate change obligations, amongst others.[4]

India's foreign policy has been marked by ambivalence. On the one hand, its deepest and finest instincts have been internationalist and cosmopolitan—there is a substantial

body of Indian international thought, from Swami Vivekananda and Rabindranath Tagore to Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru and beyond, that bears this out. On the other hand, partition and war, at the time of India's entry into international society, scarred its foreign policy psyche, leaving it unable to transcend narrow, gnawing anxieties over sovereignty. India is not the only post-colonial state to be animated in its foreign policy by a sovereignty imperative; but it is the largest and most powerful of the new states to be so deeply enmeshed in what, to borrow from economists, we could call a 'low-level equilibrium trap'—a policy stance that is stuck in managing protracted conflicts, often with considerable deftness, but that is unable to settle long-standing and burdensome quarrels. For 70 years, it has been preoccupied with not giving an inch to Pakistan, China, and the US, and as a result, with some exceptions, has been prevented from playing the more constructive global role it had envisaged at its birth. Indian foreign policy studies going forward could help rescue India from this low-level equilibrium trap.

Notes

1. *India Quarterly* began publication in 1945, *International Studies* in 1969, and *Strategic Analysis* in 1977.
2. See Krishna (1994) for the importance of maps and cartography in the construction of India's national identity. On the term 'cartographic imagination', see Smith (2008). Smith uses the term differently.
3. Appadorai (1981: 6) suggests that non-alignment was essential if domestic tranquillity was to be preserved.
4. On India's attitude to sovereignty and multilateralism, see Sidhu et al. (2013).

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CHAPTER 3

THEORIZING INDIA'S FOREIGN RELATIONS

SIDDHARTH MALLAVARAPU

Introduction

A. P. Rana and K. P. Misra argued several years ago (2005 [1989]: 78; Mallavarapu 2005: 6–7), in an audit of the state of international relations (IR) in India that there exists a 'submerged "theoretical base"' in Indian writings on IR. The suggestion is an inviting point of departure to critically examine and sift through some of the early disciplinary interventions on Indian foreign policy to make explicit some of the latent theoretical premises that appear to have informed a prior generation. For the purposes of this enquiry, a set of four volumes with different contributing editors on *India and World Affairs* along with a rich ensemble of representative writings of Sisir Gupta on various facets relating to India's foreign relations remain particularly relevant.[1]

The intent here is to make a best-case argument about home spun theorizations of India's foreign relations. While these accounts might not meet the criterion of international relations theory (IRT) as we understand it in the conventional sense, they nevertheless provide in some instances the appropriate backdrop to both raise and pursue first-order theoretical questions. Some of these writings merit being revisited by a newer generation of scholars both for a sense of the disciplinary history of the field in India as well as avoiding the ever-present spectre of 'presentism' (Schmidt 1998). It is perhaps also worth reminding ourselves that as far as the Indian variant of the discipline of IR is concerned, the first generation was constituted by *tabula rasa* IR academics who had to literally inaugurate a disciplinary field of study with the nomenclature of *International Studies* in a vastly different milieu. It is hard today to fully appreciate the set of basic institutional constraints operating at that time on these scholars. These constraints were compounded by the fact that India was only beginning its innings as a modern nation state. This is not to deny that perhaps more could have been accomplished. However, it is to testify to the reality that there existed a critical mass of thinking and latent theorizing

on various facets of India's foreign relations though arguably minuscule for a country of India's size with its accompanying claims for international stature.

The attempt here to bring to the fore certain theoretical elements from the earlier generation of writings is not to force the pace and suggest that India has its own Waltzian realists, Keohanean liberals, and Wendtian constructivists or to alternatively suggest that the national foreign policy discourse was particularly derivative of theoretical currents in the West prevailing at that moment in time. Perhaps we have all or none of them but that is beside the point. It is important to study these interventions on their own terms, to appreciate the manner in which Indian scholars theorized as insiders their place, yearnings, and dilemmas as they reached out as an independent nation state keen to build bridges with the external world. In the process of reaching out, India made its own allies and adversaries and got embroiled in various episodes (not always consciously intended). The core issue at hand is how an earlier generation of IR scholars living and working in Indian institutional settings came to intellectually interpret India's broader global moorings. Given the limited and merely illustrative nature of this enquiry, I would like to forewarn readers that this is not intended to be an exhaustive survey or catalogue of the relevant domain. I only seek here to draw attention to some early strands of writing on Indian foreign policy that gesture to theoretical concerns pertaining to India's engagement with the wider world.

This is also not to deny that there has been a spate of commentaries by scholars located outside of India on facets of Indian foreign policy right from its early post-independence days to the intervening and more recent years. This would encompass the work of Taya Zinkin, Adda Bozeman, Alan De Russett, Michael Brecher, T. A. Keenleyside, Stephen Cohen, Sumit Ganguly, T. V. Paul, Baldev Raj Nayar, and in more recent years notably the work of Priya Chacko, Rudra Chaudhuri, Harsh Pant, Daniel Markey, Andrew Kennedy, David Scott, Walter Andersen, Waheguru Pal Singh Sidhu, Bruce Jones, and Michael Arndt among others. This collective body of scholarship has engaged questions relating to the origins of Indian foreign policy, introduced comparative perspectives, studied cultural influences, diplomatic styles, colonial path dependencies, and institutional settings as well as scrutinized at some length the persona of Nehru and its implications for Indian foreign policy. Apart from these concerns, the geopolitical crucible that has forged Indian foreign policy trajectories, the dynamics of India repositioning itself as a rising power, and its evolving stance towards multilateralism both in terms of global and regional analysis have also merited some attention.

In terms of a broader roadmap, the current chapter begins by discussing the general state of play in contemporary IR in terms of theorizing foreign relations. It subsequently proceeds to focus on facets of theorizing India's foreign relations and finally, given the pedagogic functions of the *Handbook*, signals further possibilities in terms of research designs that might incorporate theory more strongly while approaching the study of foreign policy generically and India's foreign relations more specifically. The conclusion argues that what is warranted is more not less theory. But the critical question that needs to be addressed is what kind of theorizing? The suggestion here is that we need diverse strands of theorizing and theorists

of eclectic persuasions. However, theories that factor context, remain attentive to sedimented historical and cultural sensibilities, and are receptive to non-Western epistemologies are regarded as better positioned to account for how India views the world of foreign relations. It is perhaps important to state that no quintessential single Indian theory of IR or for that matter of foreign policy is essential. However, if we articulate with clarity theoretical preferences as viewed from the distinctive vantage point of India in foreign policy terms, it would contribute to a better understanding of India's motivations and actions in the international sphere. Such an enterprise calls for an awareness of both classic and cutting-edge theorizations of foreign policy from around the globe and caution to avoid uncritically embracing any of these claims merely because they emanate from conventional power centres of IR knowledge production.

International Relations Theory and Foreign Policy

Theory more often than not does not directly inform foreign policy analysis. James Rosenau, reflecting on the general state of the field of foreign policy studies, remarked that 'foreign policy analysis is devoid of general theory' (Rosenau 2011: 145). Distinguishing between 'pre-theory' and 'theory', Rosenau highlights the need for a 'pre-theory which renders raw materials comparable and ready for theorizing' (Rosenau 2011: 150). In the absence of a 'pre-theory', the general enterprise of theory building is likely to suffer. The emphasis on uncovering causality represents one significant modality of theorizing that is explanatory in nature.

There are several other idioms in which theorizing occurs in the domain of foreign policy thinking. K. J. Holsti places an emphasis on 'national role conceptions' (K. J. Holsti 2011: 220). He claims that there is a need to distinguish between different possible 'role conceptions' and also avoid misleadingly conflating for instance the foreign policies of all non-aligned nations as belonging to the same category (K. J. Holsti 2011: 225).

The constitution of adversarial 'images' in foreign policies of states and how it impacts decision-making is evident in the theoretical focus of Ole Holsti. Of specific interest is the 'structure of the belief system' and its amenability to change (O. R. Holsti 2011: 257). The broader claim Holsti advances is that 'rigid images' are quite perceptibly to the detriment of any serious amelioration of a conflict situation (O. R. Holsti 2011: 269). In similar vein, Alexander L. George's 'operational code belief system' is pivoted on theoretical dimensions of information processing (George 2011).

An additional dimension added to pursuing 'beliefs' in foreign policy decision-making is the more recent entry of emotions as an important motif alongside beliefs. Jonathan Mercer argues that '[r]ejecting the view that emotion must follow cognition or only

distorts rationality makes it possible to explore how emotion and cognition co-produce beliefs' (Mercer 2011: 243). The role of affect in shaping foreign policy one way or the other assumes increased salience in Mercer's theoretical slant of emphasis.

Margaret G. Hermann theorizes leadership in foreign policy decision-making and makes a distinction between 'independent' and 'participatory' foreign policy orientations. The degree of 'control' exercised by leaders, with the former tending to be much more control-oriented and the latter turning out to be much less control-oriented, appears to carry implications for the conduct and success or failure of foreign policy (Hermann 1980). Janice Gross Stein's theoretical interest in foreign policy relates to processes of political learning (Stein 1994). For Robert Jervis, the crux of foreign policy analysis is to decipher beliefs (Jervis 2011).

Apart from the above modes of theorizing foreign policy, all the mainstream IRTs also provide different pictures of what they treat as important in the study of foreign policy. The classical realist, Hans Morgenthau warns that '[t]he human mind in its day-by-day operations cannot bear to look the truth of politics straight in the face. It must disguise, distort, belittle, and embellish the truth—the more so, the more the individual is actively involved in the processes of politics, and particularly in those of international politics' (Morgenthau 2011: 27). Most classical realists are theoretically interested in discerning what constitutes the 'national interest' for states and how that self-definition impacts their actual behaviour in the international sphere. Arnold Wolfers further nuances how we interpret 'national security' by demonstrating that it is an 'ambiguous symbol' (Wolfers 1952).

In terms of neorealism, Colin Elman suggests that 'there is a long-running but understudied dispute about whether neorealist theories can be considered theories of foreign policy' (Elman 2011: 110). Elman's overall claim is that neorealism could be employed 'to make determinate foreign policy predictions' (Elman 2011: 123). Depending on whether you are a defensive realist or an offensive realist, Elman suggests that it carries different implications for how foreign policy behaviour is likely to be explained by these theoretical strands (Elman 2011: 118).

In more recent years, neoclassical realism seeks to directly address the theory of foreign policy. Critical of the general neglect in foreign policy theorizing, Gideon Rose argues that neoclassical realism provides a more holistic account of foreign policy by relating the 'external' to the domestic dimension much more nimbly via 'intervening variables' (Rose 2011: 73).

Liberals like Helen Milner and Andrew Moravcsik have also advanced our theoretical understanding of foreign policy in important ways. Milner in her account of trade policy for instance suggests that 'increased international interdependence have wrought changes in the trade policy preferences of industries' (2011: 153). Moravcsik goes on further to argue that 'liberal theory provides a plausible theoretical explanation for variation in the substantive content of foreign policy' (Moravcsik 2011: 182).

Constructivists are not far behind in claiming theoretical ground in interpreting foreign policies of particular states in the international system. Ted Hopf rejects only one set of possibilities in terms of the dynamics between the 'Self' and the 'Other' (Hopf

2011: 363). Jutta Weldes remains particularly attentive to how the state in the process of articulation of its self-identity 'constructs' its national interest (Weldes 2011: 323).

Besides these theoretical approaches to foreign policy, mention may be made of other well-known slices of scholarship—Graham Allison's work on decision-making, Jack Levy on organizational processes, the interplay of ideas and foreign policy in the work of Judith Goldstein and Robert O. Keohane and explications of the connections between domestic and international politics in the works of Peter J. Katzenstein and Robert D. Putnam.[2] Suffice it to say that for any scholar interested in theorizing India's foreign relations there is much to factor from within the existing repertoire of generic theoretical scholarship on foreign policy. The challenge is to examine how context complicates these claims and whether they are more persuasive ways of theorizing developments relating to Indian foreign policy.

Eschewing a 'Quarantine': Theorizing India's Foreign Relations

A matter of some concern is that in the standard canonical literature of theoretical slices of foreign policy scholarship, there are scarce references to scholars from Africa, Asia, the Arab world, and South America. Surely something is amiss in terms of representation within the field of foreign policy theorizing and analytics. How do scholars in IR from these assorted regions view the foreign policy action of their own states and come to interpret the broader palimpsest of international politics? Why is it that so few of these commentaries find a way into the main sinews of IR? Is this merely a happenstance or another symptom of the Anglo-American ethnocentrism that pervades IRT more generally? How can foreign policy, a traditional arena of enquiry in IR, remain entirely insulated from some of this mainstream ethnocentrism? While being wary of any form of nativism, we need to more seriously invest in acquainting ourselves with our intellectual inheritances especially in disciplinary terms to understand the peculiarities that attach to particular forms of representation and argumentation in IR. This is not to suggest that all these scholars were making entirely exceptionalist arguments about India and her role in world affairs. On the contrary, some struck out boldly and made robust arguments often invoking universal logics.

While reading through the writings of some of the first generation of Indian IR scholars writing on foreign policy, a scholar who struck me as particularly prescient, insightful, and (most importantly from our perspective here) theoretically informed in his approach was Sisir Gupta. While he is perhaps best known for his book *Kashmir: A Study in India-Pakistan Relations* (1967), Gupta also contributed to a whole range of other questions germane to foreign policy but also directly on issues such as 'great power relations' and the place, status, and strategies of the Third World vis-à-vis the

major powers in the Cold War milieu.[3] I quote from his work here rather extensively to give you a flavour of his mode of reasoning and the theoretical tenor of his reflections.

On the category as well as the connotation of 'Third World', Gupta writing in the 1970s argued that

> [o]bjective realities apart, the elites of the Third World states have often been brought up in those Western intellectual traditions which attached considerable importance to the problem of uplifting the weak and under-privileged sections of their societies and which extrapolated the theory of the need for solidarity among the under-privileged for collective struggles to improve their lot into a theory of international relations which thought of associations or leagues of 'Oppressed Peoples'. (Gupta 1981a: 45)

He further claimed that

> [t]he Leninist theory of imperialism has had great impact on the minds of the people who formulated the world view of these countries, and without being Communists or Socialists in their attitudes to internal social problems, many of them regarded their anti-imperialist struggles as part of a world wide effort to improve the lots of the international have-nots (as indeed Lenin and Stalin had anticipated). The consciousness of being the have-nots of the world has influenced and will continue to influence the behaviour and attitudes of the Third World states. (Gupta 1981a: 45)

Distinguishing between appearances and realities, Gupta observed that

> both the revolutionaries and the conservatives of the world make the facile assumption that because they are under-privileged and are have-nots in some ways, the Third World states are like the proletariat of the international society: the former hope and the latter fear that being under-privileged, the nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America will seek to bring about radical transformation of the institutions and arrangements which sustain the present international system and are dedicated to total change in the structure of world politics. (Gupta 1981a: 46)

However, Gupta points out that 'to bring about radical social transformation through revolutionary methods is for many Third World elites tantamount to passing a death sentence on themselves. The aversion to internal radicalism, of the unwillingness to conceive revolutionary transformations within one's society tempers the zeal to act as have-nots' (Gupta 1981a: 46).

More telling is his eschewal of polemics and diagnosis that

> [i]f the Third World consciousness was a primary motivating force, India and China, Pakistan and Afghanistan, Ethiopia and Somalia would have found it easier to resolve their disputes and problems in order to be able to present a united front before the rest of the world. The inescapable fact is that many of the Third World states have in fact sought to promote their national interests vis-à-vis their neighbours with the

> help of the very nations who are most unquestionably the haves of today's world. (Gupta 1981a: 46)

His verdict was that '[t]he foreign policy preoccupations of many of the Third World states are, and in all probability will continue to be, more varied than one of seeking structural changes in world politics' (Gupta 1981a: 47).

By this reading, there is no exceptionalism one can assign to Third World states and their foreign policies. Similar to some strands of realism, Gupta argued that 'they [the Third World] not only want to promote their individual and collective interests through the manipulation of existing international forces, but also to avoid any contingency in which international anarchy or disorderliness hinder their efforts to build their nations and consolidate their independence' (Gupta 1981a: 48). The policy prescription that flows from this diagnosis of the Third World quandary and its IR practice was clear: '[g]radual improvement of their position within the international system, through orderly change, rather than collapse of whatever order exists, is therefore the most rational goal for the Third World' (Gupta 1981a: 48).

I referred to Gupta as prescient because he argued then as perhaps some would now that '[d]isarmament, as a method of reducing the existing inequalities of power distribution among the nations of the world, remains a chimera' (Gupta 1981a: 67). While in one register, Gupta's writing can be interpreted as mirroring elements of realism, in another register Gupta could, in contemporary theoretical parlance, be viewed as a constructivist who is attentive to power–knowledge configurations. He observes on one occasion that '[w]hat has made the Third World's confusion worse confounded is that the major Powers of the world have sought to describe ... changes in their relationships in a manner that would help them retain their advantage in the outlying continents and among the smaller Powers of the world' (Gupta 1981a: 63). That a large part of politics has to do with the framing and generation of meaning that occludes certain possibilities in the interests of the powerful is a claim most constructivists would be sympathetic to.

Theoretically, the puzzle in relation to the Third World states was to ask 'whether they can ever re-introduce themselves as active participants in international politics without acquiring a relatively higher degree of power than what they now possess' (Gupta 1981a: 85). To reiterate, the context being referred to was the 1970s. This provides an interesting theoretical opening in terms of examining how states can impact political outcomes while faced with conventional power deficits.

Even in terms of foreign policy, Gupta recognized most clearly the paradox of a materially weak power like India being 'a far more important element in world politics than the power and resources at its disposal warranted' (Gupta 1981b: 342). Going beyond the specific, Gupta diagnosed India's eternal foreign policy dilemmas as being '(a) [c]hoosing between alternative methods of advancing the country's national interests in the areas of internal progress, regional stability and world peace and world reforms; and (b) deciding how the emphases on these three sets of objectives should be distributed when they exerted contradictory pulls over the country's foreign policy' (Gupta 1981b: 340). To me, this represents another excellent theoretical opening in terms of both the

'diagnostic' and 'choice' propensities evident in the work of scholars like Alexander L. George, leading to specific preferences and allocation of finite resources for a middle power state (George 2011: 280).

In a commemorative volume honouring Sisir Gupta who died rather young, Hedley Bull was keen to engage the corpus of work that Gupta left behind. He asked himself and his readers, 'to what extent can his [Sisir Gupta] interpretation of events in India be applied to the non-Western or non-European world as a whole?' (Bull 1981: 201). Regretting the fact that '[o]ur thinking about world politics today has been mainly shaped by explanations and interpretations that pay little attention to the persistence of traditional cultures', Bull went on to argue that 'cultural differences are also a fact of life, and to understand them we shall need knowledge—historical, literary, anthropological—of the particular cultures concerned; explanations of the processes at work in all societies will not help very much. If Sisir Gupta is right, the forward march of modernization, so far from eliminating traditional forms of life, may actually strengthen them' (Bull 1981: 208).

The four volumes on *India and World Affairs* produced in the 1950s and 1960s provide another relevant site for thinking about the underlying theoretical assumptions that might have informed foreign policy reflection among an earlier generation of IR scholars from India. K. P. Karunakaran (who edited both the first two volumes in the series from 1947 to 1953) details at some length the debate surrounding India's participation in the Commonwealth. What is theoretically of interest is an assessment of India's standing in the wider world and the forces of history at play during the early post-independence years. Karunakaran argued that

> India's contribution to the awakening of Asia was significant. India holds a unique position in the continent, and strategically she is so situated that she cannot be ignored in a consideration of any major problem relating to defence, trade, industry or economic policy, affecting any group of Asian countries. Her Government is comparatively stable and she is potentially a powerful country. India is, therefore, bound to play an important part in Asian affairs. (Karunakaran 1952: 33)

In the second volume, Karunakaran argued that Cold War politics militated against a more influential role for India in world affairs. He observed, '[t]his aspect of the international situation made it possible for India and other Asian and African states, who were uncommitted to either of the two camps, to make their influence felt in world affairs, something which, otherwise, they might not have been able to do so' (Karunakaran 1958: 1). The constraints imposed by the international system on national ambitions of new post-colonial states or latecomers in history provide another ripe arena for further theoretical enquiry. India's mediatory role in international politics also came in for some special attention. Karunakaran noted that '[b]y 1952 the infant State of India had also emerged as a significant factor in international politics—a factor which could not be ignored by others—not only when her own interests were at stake but also with regard to the settlement of international disputes

in which the Big Powers were concerned and in which India itself was not directly involved' (Karunakaran 1958: 1).

M. S. Rajan's part of the series on *India in World Affairs* covered the period from 1954 to 1956. Attempting to decipher the Indian proclivity to 'moderation' in international affairs, Rajan seeks to demonstrate the interplay of international and domestic politics to determine a particular stance in international affairs. Again avoiding any claim to a distinct exceptionalism, he observes that:

> India's approach to foreign policy was characterized by several distinguishing features—of course, not all of them peculiar to India. Perhaps the most characteristic of these was the tolerance of differing views and attitudes, and moderation. The former was imposed (as much on India as on all other nations of the world) by the very fact of membership of international society by states of diverse ideologies and interests. In a sense, therefore, peaceful co-existence of nations was not a discretionary policy but a mere acknowledgment of the facts of international society. (Rajan 1964: 31)

Registering his dissent from conventional characterizations of Indian foreign policy as idealist Rajan clarified that

> [a]n approach to Indian foreign policy which is governed by the several considerations ... had the risk of being misunderstood as an idealistic or ethical approach—in other words, one which was not solely governed by a country's national interest as such—and India was not quite successful in running that risk. But there was, and is never, any question in the minds of the Indian policy-makers of consciously trying to operate on an idealistic or moral plane in world affairs; they are, like statesmen of every other country, primarily interested in promoting, directly or indirectly, India's national interests, conceived of course, within the broader framework of mutual interests of other nations as well as the overall needs of a progressive world society. It so happened that many of the policies and actions of the Indian Government and the aspirations of the Indian people (e.g. opposition to colonialism and racialism) were in harmony with the needs of world society and the general moral values prevailing in the world at large. (Rajan 1964: 39)

He further suggests that '[i]t is largely due to this emphasis on the right means to achieve even right ends in India's IR that the widespread, but inaccurate, belief has come to prevail, especially abroad, that India's foreign policy is based on, or is guided by, moral principles. India's policy is no more moral than that of any other country; the policy as such is amoral' (Rajan 1964: 48). What makes this relevant is that none of these assessments are saccharine endorsals of the official stance or crude hagiographies.

A final volume covered just one year, 1957–8, and was authored by V. K. Arora and Angadipuram Appadorai. There are two elements which I intend to briefly flag here. The first observation relates to the eschewal of the language of 'national interest' in at least some of Nehru's speeches. While assuming that the obvious need not be stated Arora and Appadorai note that '[n]either in Nehru's broadcast from New Delhi on 7

September 1946 nor at the subsequent press conference was there any reference to the promotion of India's national interest as an objective of foreign policy. Why was this not mentioned? I believe it was taken for granted' (Arora and Appadorai 1975: 1). The other dimension related to some failings regarding India's foreign policy even during the early years. Arora and Appadorai argue that '[i]t had not been possible to incorporate Goa with the Indian Union. The people of Indian origin settled in Ceylon had not been treated as full-fledged citizens of the country. Relations with Pakistan continued to be unfriendly and it had not been possible to evict Pakistan from the part of Kashmir it had occupied'(Arora and Appadorai 1975: 304). However, 'to say that India's foreign policy was a disastrous failure because of these facts is to misjudge what is possible and what is not possible in international politics. Even states more powerful than India militarily and economically have not always been able to achieve the objectives of their foreign policy' (Arora and Appadorai 1975: 304). The comparison held out with other more privileged members of the international community is healthy in theoretical terms and provides yet another set of theoretical possibilities to build on.

In the 1980s, a special issue of the journal *International Studies* brought together a whole range of contributions on the subject of non-alignment. Based on an engagement with this literature, I argued elsewhere that that this body of literature also raised some important theoretical questions. These pertained to 'how one might explain the nature of political change and historical transitions, decide on the cast of actors who mattered, give consideration to what causal mechanisms account for change and how the broader international community responds to these developments' (Mallavarapu 2009: 171). However, I also suggested that 'there were no attempts to formulate an explicit theory which looked at how middle powers/post-colonial states interpreted their material and ideational resources and what sort of policy outcomes these conceptions were likely to generate' (Mallavarapu 2009: 171). I am now of the view that Sisir Gupta's work of the 1970s engages this question and does indeed articulate in theoretical terms how the 'Third World' and within that India was positioning itself in the wider international system.

Conclusion

The chapter has sought to foreground the case for a closer reading of Indian accounts of foreign policy with the objective of extrapolating the tacit theoretical premises that inform particular authors and their view of India's role in the world. The intellectual crucible and broader milieu in which these scholars were working to forge a new discipline of international studies generated its own accents in the manner in which theory was understood and employed in their work. While some of these scholars strayed away from consciously partaking of broader theoretical schools, they nevertheless had their own assessments of what mattered in foreign policy and how best India's actions can be interpreted in the specific milieus that concerned them. While it is perhaps possible to

discern realist, liberal, or constructivist moments in Indian foreign policy thinking and reflection, we need to be cautious not to box any of these scholars prematurely under one or the other rubric without an adequate engagement with the entire corpus of their work.

In fact, a part of the reason why theory in its explicit avatar may not have appealed to these scholars is because in their own assessments it was perceived as inadequate to the task of neatly explaining what was going on in the domain of Indian foreign policy. The heuristic strategy adopted by me here could be applied to a much wider gamut of subsequent writings on various aspects of Indian foreign policy. Minimally, book-length accounts dealing with different phases and facets of Indian foreign policy by Bimal Prasad, J. Bandhopadhyay, V. P. Dutt, S. D. Muni, Surjit Mansingh, C. Raja Mohan, Harish Kapur, Srinath Raghavan, and Rudra Chaudhuri deserve closer attention. Apart from these, assorted edited volumes on foreign policy by Rajen Harshe and K. M. Seethi, Sumit Ganguly, Waheguru Pal Singh, Pratap Bhanu Mehta, and Bruce Jones on India's engagement with multilateralism and the more recent co-edited anthology by Kanti Bajpai and Harsh Pant on foreign policy should be carefully engaged with the intent of discerning broader patterns of theoretical reflection that have informed slices of Indian foreign policy analysis and to detect what has changed over the years. Besides these accounts, an enquiry into the manner in which Indian practitioners cognized the external world reflecting their own prior socialization in the Indian Foreign Service might also open up avenues to examine particular interpretations of foreign policy. The contributions of J. N. Dixit, Muchkund Dubey, Shyam Saran, and Rajiv Sikri serve as a case in point and are also likely to reveal latent or explicit theoretical premises about how things appear to work especially in the sphere of foreign policy preference formation and political outcomes.[4] This could profitably be explored alongside practitioner accounts of Indian foreign policy by former diplomats from other countries who have served stints in India.[5]

During the course of the chapter, the attempt has been to encapsulate the theoretical lay of the land as far as mainstream IR theoretical scholarship on foreign policy is concerned. IR theorists of various persuasions recognize that there is a fair amount of theoretical work that still remains undone in the field of foreign policy studies. Neoclassical realists are keen to learn more about 'the waxing and waning of material power capabilities in the first place' (Rose 2011: 90). Neoliberal institutionalists believe that '[w]hat we need now are theories that account for (1) when experiments to restructure the international environment are tried, and (2) whether a particular experiment is likely to succeed' (Axelrod and Keohane 2011: 204). Constructivists would like to know more about 'the interaction among learning, politics, and foreign policy change [as] inextricably joined to a deep debate about the construction of knowledge in political life' (Stein 1994: 300). Another positive direction for scholars working on foreign policy would be to introduce a strong comparative dimension to their research. Rosenau argues that 'single country analyses are themselves theoretically deficient' (Rosenau 2011: 148).

Foreign policy analytics in India needs its own share of theorists. Ideally, they need to represent a broad spectrum of theoretical persuasions and must productively

engage different slices of foreign policy realities. Further, good theory must be built on good empirics and theory could also be generated both in the explanatory and understanding traditions that Martin Hollis and Steve Smith envisage in their explication of these approaches in social science and its implications for IR research (Hollis and Smith 1990). Context remains critical to good theorizing and if it is informed by local histories and an appreciation of cultural path dependencies it would contribute to a much more nuanced theory-building enterprise. Finally, while it is important to study recent theoretical developments in the field of foreign policy studies, it is equally critical to approach these trends with some caution while assessing their relevance to our particular foci in this part of the world. Uncritical grafting of mainstream theories will do us more a disservice than help in comprehending a complex world. The fact that much is still not settled and is unlikely to be so (given the contingent nature of the field of enquiry) is good news for anybody embarking afresh on a journey of 'thinking theoretically' about foreign policy generically or curious about the relevant Indian ecology in this traditional and crucial arena of world politics.[6] After all, Albert Hirschman in the pages of *World Politics* as far back as 1970 reminded us that 'paradigms' could indeed prove at times a 'hindrance to understanding' (Hirschmann 1970).

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Notes

1. These volumes are as follows: Karunakaran (1952, 1958); Rajan (1964); and Arora and Appadorai (1975). All these studies were published under the auspices of the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA). Many of Sisir Gupta's writings are collected in Rajan and Ganguli (1981b). See also Rajan and Ganguli (1981a).
2. See, for example, Allison (2011); Levy (2011); Goldstein and Keohane (2011); Katzenstein (2011); Putnam (2011).
3. Also see Gupta (1964).
4. See, for example, Dixit (2001); Sikri (2009); Dubey (2012).
5. See Malone (2012).
6. See, for example, Rosenau and Durfee (2000).

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PART II

EVOLUTION OF INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY

CHAPTER 4

THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE RAJ AND ITS LEGACY

SNEH MAHAJAN

THE 'Raj or the 'British Raj' is the term usually used for the British Empire that extended over the Indian subcontinent from the mid-nineteenth century until 1947, and was commonly called 'India'. The British had a clear concept of the region which they knew as 'India' and over which they established what became known as the British Empire in India, and which today forms India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. In the year 1600, the British established a chartered company to trade and called it the English East India Company. In 1773, when the British had established control only over the province of Bengal and small conclaves near Chennai and Mumbai, the Regulating Act was passed under which the Governor of Bengal was described as the 'Governor General of British possessions in *India*'.

The British took far-reaching precautions to prevent any European country from advancing towards India. In 1798, when Napoleon invaded Egypt, the British government thought in terms of organizing a distance defense for the entire region that lay on the route to India. In July 1807, when Napoleon and Tsar Alexander I held discussions about a joint invasion of India and signed the Treaty of Tilsit, it asked the Government of India to send friendly missions to all states that lay between India and Europe—Punjab, Sind, Muscat, Afghanistan, and Persia. By 1856, the British had brought India under either their direct rule or indirect control through what they described as 'the Indian Princes'.

The British Empire in India was too massive ever to fall under the aegis of the Colonial Office. It was governed as a distinct unit. London needed a strong central government in India, obedient to it, yet capable of keeping the provincial administrations in line with metropolitan purposes. Step by step, the British built their Empire on the administrative structure that existed under the Mughals from the center to the *tehesil* level.

In the nineteenth century, when the British established their control over India, Britain was the 'top' nation. The British policy-makers wanted to maintain Britain's standing as a great power. It is generally held that Britain's great power status was based

on three things—its industrial and commercial strength, its naval supremacy, and its worldwide empire. However, trade and the navy were merely instruments of power. It was Britain's Empire that was the most visible expression of Britain's standing in the affairs of the world. The Indian Empire formed 97 per cent of Britain's Asiatic Empire. In Britain's worldwide Empire, in terms of population, in 1912, of every 100 persons in Britain and its Empire (dependent and self-governing together), ten lived in the United Kingdom, five lived in self-governing dominions, 12 in all other colonies put together, and 73 lived in the Indian Empire alone (Davis and Huttonback 1986: 28).

The Indian Empire, with its immense human and material resources, its huge army, and its great importance to the British economy, always featured high in the calculations of the British. There is compelling evidence to show that, in Britain as well as in all European countries, it was taken for granted that loss of India would be a great blow to Britain. India's substantial contribution to the two World Wars reiterated emphatically that India was an imperial asset. The First World War galvanized nationalist sentiment in India. The British government passed Government of India Acts in 1919 and 1935 ostensibly for 'the gradual development of self-governing institutions'. However, now historians accept that the aim of the government was not to prepare Indians for self-government but to prolong their rule by winning over the support of a section of Indian leaders. Britain's determination to retain hold over India did not falter until after the end of the Second World War.

The most important feature of the Government of India's foreign policy until 1947 was that, being a colony of the British, its foreign policy was decided in the interest of the British. A colony or a colonial state is a regime through which a colonial power, i.e. an external entity, governs with a view to deriving maximum benefit from the resources and labor within that colony. The grand strategy adopted by the British aimed at ensuring full security to the Indian Empire, protecting all routes between Britain and India, and ensuring that India's trade and commerce were carried on in Britain's interest. Generations of historians have argued that the strategic and political needs of the British were different from, and occasionally in conflict with, those of India and that the Government of India enjoyed considerable liberty of action especially in determining relations with other states in Asia. Four types of explanations are advanced in this connection. First, the distance between Britain and India enabled the Government of India to act in its own way either by calculated design or inadvertently. Second, 'the man on the spot' tended to act in such ways as not to leave much choice to the authorities at London. Third, it is argued that the execution of policies in any case lay with the government at Kolkata/New Delhi, and, finally, that the Government of India maintained direct relations with the states in the neighborhood. But, as already said, British India's foreign policy was decided at London and wholly in Britain's interest.

This created essential unity of purpose and harmony between the authorities in London and Kolkata/New Delhi.[1] The Foreign Office, the War Office, the India Office and the Government of India all became associated with the external relations and the security of the Indian Empire, sifted and exchanged information regarding the motives and military potentialities of states in the vicinity of India, and coordinated different

plans of action. But, in the end, it was the decision of the government at London that prevailed. The mere hierarchy of power ensured that. The Government of India remained an arm of the government at London. Foreign policy of the Government of British India was the foreign policy of the British, for the British, and by the British.

Guarding the Land Frontier

The land frontier of Britain's Indian Empire extended in a half circle touching from west to east –Iran, Afghanistan, Tibet, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, and Burma. The Government of India was entrusted with the task of handling relations with all these states (except Iran). The British did not apprehend danger to their Indian Empire from any of these. Inside India, there were French conclaves at Pondicherry, and Portuguese in Goa, Daman, and Diu. But given Britain's naval superiority, these did not cause anxiety.

The British rulers of India constantly adopted a policy of interposing a protected state between the actual possessions they administered and the possessions of formidable neighbors whom they desired to keep at arm's length. This state in between was called the 'buffer' state. In fact, the buffer state as a concept of international politics is primarily of British-Indian coinage and came into vogue somewhere in the 1880s. The buffer state was given internal freedom, but was expected to exclude all extraneous influences in the conduct of foreign relations. It thus accepted derogation of sovereignty. It was not even a satellite state. A buffer state would break down if any attempt was made to convert it into a satellite (Mehra 2007: 114–15). In 1902, Lord Lansdowne, the Foreign Secretary, who had been the Viceroy of India (1884–94) and later, the Secretary for War, defined a buffer zone as 'an intervening zone sufficient to prevent direct contact between the dominions of Great Britain and those of other great military Powers'.[2]

In the nineteenth century, the British gradually built up a series of buffers along the landward periphery of the Indian Empire. In the parlance of the Raj this system became known as 'the ring fence'. They maintained Iran, Afghanistan, and Tibet as the outer ring. The three Himalayan states—Nepal, Bhutan, and Sikkim—were maintained as the inner ring. These formed a territorial buffer between India, and China and Tibet. These states in the vicinity of India remained weak and economically 'undeveloped'. The British did not apprehend danger to their Indian Empire from any of these. Beyond these states lay the Russian Empire and the Chinese Empire. Relations with Russia and China were maintained by the British government at London. The foreign policy of British India was determined at London though there were constant consultations between the governments of Britain and India.

From the 1860s, the security policy in India centered on defense against the expansion of the Tsarist Empire towards the northwest frontier. In the direction of Kabul, it occupied Tashkent in 1865, Bukhara in 1866, and Samarkand in 1868. Babar had invaded India in the 1520s from Samarkand. The occupation of Merv in 1884 brought the Russian Empire almost to the Afghan frontier. In the 1890s, the British government tried to settle

the issue by demarcating the frontier of Afghanistan—between the Indian Empire and Afghanistan in 1893 and the Russian Empire and Afghanistan in 1895. These were not drawn on an ethnic, cultural, or economic basis. The sole aim was to avoid having a frontier contiguous to the Russia Empire. In Afghanistan, a long corridor which became known as the Wakhan Corridor—220 kilometers in length and 16–60 kilometers in width—was created. The problem became worse confounded when, towards the end of the nineteenth century, Russia started building railways in Central Asia. After the Franco- Russian Alliance of 1894, France began to provide funds for building these railways. With this it seemed that Russia was overcoming the biggest obstacle—distance. Moreover, in case of Russia's invasion of India, the French navy could delay the sending of British troops to India. The fear generated by Russia's expansion became known as 'Russophobia'.

Why did the expansion of Russia cause such anxiety at London? The reason was that the British knew that the Raj was based on the awe of British arms and not on the consent of Indians. Any defeat by the Russian army, even on the remote frontier in a mere skirmish, could create a spasm of sedition from one end of India to another. Besides, by taking advantage of Britain's vulnerability on the Indian frontier, Russia could extract concessions from Britain elsewhere. The British navy could not move on wheels. From the beginning of the nineteenth century, Britain's strategic preoccupation with this threat to the Indian Empire became a major component of Britain's foreign policy in general and defense of the Indian Empire in particular (Mahajan 2002: chs. 1 and 4).

In this background, in 1902, the British government appointed the Committee of Imperial Defence to advise on the grand strategy to be adopted for the defense of Empire. It became the direct link between military experts and the Cabinet and had the potential to influence foreign as well as defense policy. The Government of India was kept well-informed. Since its inception in 1902, the War Office and the India Office agreed that, in view of the construction of railways in Central Asia by Russia, it was difficult to defend India from Russian assault as the British did not have adequate manpower and the material resources to defend India from a position of strength. Such was the determination to hold on to India that grotesque plans like keeping some army units in South Africa to reinforce the Indian army and requisitioning soldiers from Japan were discussed.[3] The issue of lack of means to defend the Indian Empire was one of the reasons for opting for a diplomatic solution—the signing of the Anglo-Russian Convention in 1907. During the First World War, Britain, France, and Russia joined the war against Germany on the same side.

Even after the collapse of the Tsarist Empire in 1917, the War Office remained convinced that Soviet Russia would strike a blow at the Indian Empire as soon as its forces were ready. The threat was exacerbated by the Bolshevik ideology that projected itself as the enemy of imperialism. Down to 1940 when Russia joined the Second World War on the side of Britain, the problem of defense of India against Russia's designs remained the central preoccupation of British foreign and defense policies.

The British came into contact with China from the late eighteenth century from the side of India to ensure the security of the northern frontier, and from the side of the

Pacific coast for promoting commercial interests. Since the mid-seventeenth century, China was under the rule of the Qing dynasty. The Qing rulers claimed sovereignty over Tibet, Xinkiang, Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim, Burma, and Indo-China. A Chinese representative stayed at Lhasa who was officially called *Amban*. But it was not clear exactly what his powers were. The Nepalese government also sent a quinquennial mission to Beijing, the last of which was sent in 1908.

Historians have noted that British policy towards China was marked by 'ambivalence' and 'ambiguities'. This could be the result of the fact that British interests were perceived differently at London and at Kolkota/New Delhi. To ensure the security of the northern frontier of India, the Government of British India became engaged in skirmishes to resist the pressure from Chinese expansionist designs. This created resentment. On the other hand, the British government did not want to antagonize Beijing. It continued to believe that, in China's huge territory and vast population, lay an undeveloped market of fabulous potential. Though the actual amount of trade with China remained very limited, this misplaced belief made London opt for policies that were not likely to offend Beijing. In choosing their options in relations with China, London could not always ignore the concerns of the Government of India. But, ultimately, British interests prevailed (Trotter 1975: 18–19; Mehra 1974: 267–70; Noorani 2011: 68–9, 193).

Relations with States in the Immediate Neighborhood

The Government of India created territorial buffers from one end of India to the other. On the outer ring of states, Iran was not seen as a threat because it opened in a desert area and had an extensive seacoast. It was, therefore, amenable to British naval pressure.

Afghanistan was viewed as an ideal buffer against Russia's expansion because it was large and was difficult to traverse. To bring the rulers of Afghanistan in line with British interests, the British invaded Afghanistan twice—in 1839 and again in 1878. Each time there were bloody wars and the British extricated themselves with difficulty. However, after the Second Afghan War, they took control over the foreign affairs of Afghanistan. During the First World War, the Afghan ruler remained friendly to the British.

The collapse of the Tsarist Empire in 1917 removed the sole inducement for the Afghans to remain within the British orbit. In May 1919, some Afghan troops crossed the border and the Third Afghan War started. The Afghans struck all along the border from Chitral to Chaman over a distance of some 1,000 kilometers. It is significant that the British, despite war-weariness and the volatile political situation in India, used all resources at their disposal to defeat the Afghans. A force of a quarter of a million was mobilized and fighter planes were requisitioned from the Royal Air Force. At the end of the war, Afghanistan was given freedom to conduct its foreign relations. But the British continued to look upon Afghanistan as a protected state.

During the interwar years, the Germans took unusual interest in Afghanistan. But the British were not too alarmed because Germany was susceptible to Britain's naval

pressure. On the other hand, the level of anxiety regarding the threat from Russia increased in the 1930s when aviation developed and the Soviet government brought up the issue of starting air service to cities in Afghanistan. In 1934, the Chief of Staff in India found it difficult to believe that after 17 years of revolution, Russia was in a position to lead the world in aviation for the purpose of aggression.[4]

The three Himalayan states—Nepal, Bhutan, and Sikkim—possessed cultural and religious ties as well as their own traditions of political relationship with India, Tibet, and China. Sikkim had special importance because it provided an ideal transit route to Tibet. These states were not considered parts of India as Princely States or as a colonial territory. Instead the British maintained these states as buffers between India, and China and Tibet. This did not happen without armed conflicts. Separate treaties were signed with each of them from time to time, defining relations with them and settling borders. In 1940, the Foreign Department described Nepal as a 'state with very special relationship with His Majesty's Government'.[5] The defense of Bhutan was guaranteed by the Indian Government and about Sikkim, in a treaty signed in 1890, Beijing accepted that Sikkim was indeed under British protection.

India's long frontier, for most of its length, was coterminous with Tibet. With its large desolate area, scanty population, and negligible armed strength, Tibet could not pose any menace to India. The British had tried to establish contact with Tibet as early as the 1770s and then in the 1860s. But the Tibetans received them coldly.

Around 1900, Tibet sprang into prominence when Aghvan Dorjieif, a Buddhist monk who had the ear of the Tsar, visited Tibet many times. In 1899, Lord Curzon became the Governor General of India. He was convinced that the Russians should not be allowed to extend their influence in any region on the Indian frontier. He asked London for permission to send an expedition to Lhasa. Contemporaries as well as historians have held that the Government of India had built up its case on extremely unsatisfactory evidence. But, after the disintegration of the USSR, the 'Russian side of the story' has become available and has confirmed that Dorjieff had indeed delivered a personal letter from the Dalai Lama to Tsar Nicholas II. The next year, Dorjieff had arranged a strictly confidential visit of Tibetan envoys to St. Petersburg where they were well received. However, the Russian government did not make any commitment against Britain (Shaumian 2000). This was the time when the British government was very conscious of the lack of resources to meet Russia in superior force on the northwest frontier of India. Yet, the Cabinet endorsed the proposal of the Government of India after discussing the whole issue at length.[6]

The expedition left for Lhasa in July 1903. Russia and China did not help Tibet in any way. But, before the expedition entered Lhasa in August 1904, the Dalai Lama fled to Urga in Mongolia. A convention was signed at Lhasa in 1904 which became a subject of grave controversy because Britain seemed to have proclaimed a protectorate of sorts over Tibet which it had recognized as a part of the Qing Empire. The position of Britain and Russia vis-à-vis Tibet was defined in Anglo-Russian Entente of 1907 which provided that the two signatory powers would refrain from interfering in Tibet except through the mediation of the Chinese government.

During 1907–11, Beijing encouraged the governor of Sichuan province to embark on an aggressive policy in Tibet and Assam. He also laid claims to Bhutan and Nepal which were dismissed by the Government of India. In February 1910, he entered Lhasa and this time the Dalai Lama took shelter in India. He made probing incursions into Assam. After this the Government of India extended the 'inner line' in Assam to the 'outer line', thus bringing the tribes between these two lines under British jurisdiction. In October 1911, there was a revolution in China which led to the fall of the Qing dynasty. A period of political uncertainty ensued. The Tibetans rose in revolt and, in 1912, effectively expelled the Chinese from central Tibet. With this, Chinese political influence was almost entirely ousted from Tibet. In June 1912, the Dalai Lama left India for Lhasa and proclaimed Tibet's independence.

Meanwhile, the British took prompt measures to carefully survey the area along the Assam border to settle the frontier of Assam. For this purpose they convened a conference at Shimla in October 1913 in which, from the British point of view, Britain, China, and the Dalai Lama's regime in Lhasa were equal participants. The conference lasted from October 1913 to July 1914. By April 1914, the draft convention was worked out, and on the convention map, the boundary between Outer and Inner Tibet was shown by a blue line to illustrate Article IX that dealt with the issue. The same map contained a red line showing the India–Tibet boundary (the McMahon Line). The three plenipotentiaries concluded the convention with their initials and seals 'in token acceptance' on April 27, 1914. In addition, the red line showing the India–Tibet boundary in greater detail was etched on a two-sheet map. The government at Lhasa accepted this map. This line extended the territory of British India up to the edge of the Tibetan plateau and brought the tribes in Tawang, Siang, and the Rima area within the frontier of British India (Mehra 2007: 21–2). Thereafter, it seemed that Ivan Chen received an order from his government not to sign the final convention. Finally, on July 3, 1914, the governments of India and Tibet signed it. It is significant that in the memorandum given by the Beijing government on June 13 on its objections to the settlement which had been initialed, it objected to the line laying down the frontier between China and Tibet, and did not object to the McMahon Line that laid down the frontier between India and Tibet.

After this convention, the British recognized Tibet as an autonomous state under Chinese suzerainty. But Lhasa remained very keen on some settlement with China. With no settlement eventuating, it tried to maintain friendly relations with both China and Britain without allowing any country to obtain much influence on its affairs. The Chinese too never regarded their position as being in anyway final. On its part, the Government of India accepted that the detailed settlement of the Tibetan question must await the return of favorable conditions in China.

The Government of India did not change the map of India until 1936 hoping that a mutually satisfactory settlement with China on the border between India and Tibet could be negotiated. But it decided to act when it seemed that, in view of the weak position of the Chinese government, there was no prospect of an early end to the stalemate. After consultation with the India Office and the War Office, the new map of India was published in January 1939 specifying, for the first time, the boundary line between India

and Tibet. It followed McMahon's original line of 1914. From 1912 until 1950, the Chinese government in fact exercised no control over Tibet. Under the Indian Independence Act of 1947, the Shimla Agreement with Tibet devolved on India.

On the northernmost frontier, after the First Anglo-Sikh War (1845–6), the British created the state of Jammu and Kashmir with Gulab Singh as the Maharaja. This was the time when the British were attempting to open up some ports in China for trade in tea, opium, silk, and other articles. The British were also keen to open up the heart of Asia to trade. They appointed commissions in 1846 and 1847, to demarcate the borders with the Chinese and the Tibetans and to discuss issues relating to trade. But Beijing did not respond.

By 1900, the British officials had drawn two maps suggesting possible lines of demarcation. One line which became known as Johnson–Ardagh Line or Johnson Line, aligned the boundary of the Aksai Chin region of Ladakh to the Kuen Lun mountains with the Aksai Chin plateau and the Karakoram mountains between them. Another boundary line, initially suggested by George Macartney, put most of Aksai Chin in the Chinese territory. This line along with the Karakoram mountains as natural boundary was presented to the Chinese in a note by Sir Claude MacDonald, the envoy at Beijing, in March 1899. The Chinese did not respond to this note. It became known as the Macartney–MacDonald Line. Thus, both the lines existed only on paper.

After the First World War, the British officially used the Johnson Line to show the northern boundary of the Indian Empire though it was left demarcated. Between 1927 and 1950, Aksai Chin was a region of no importance. No British or Chinese administration existed there. After 1947, the Government of India used the Johnson Line, which included Aksai Chin, as official boundary. But in maps, the Aksai Chin sector was shown as 'undemarcated'. In fact, until the mid-1950s no one had heard about Aksai Chin. Thereafter, it sprang into headlines and emerged as a conflict zone between India and China.

Relations with States on the Indian Ocean Rim

Britain was an island state and, therefore, creation and maintenance of Empire and trade depended on effective sea communication. The British government showed a determination to maintain control over all routes to and from India. Of these the Middle Eastern region was the most important because it formed the strategic corridor between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean. Aden acquired crucial significance when a railway was built across the Isthmus of Suez. In 1839, it was seized and made a part of the Bombay Presidency. In 1841, to ensure the security of the Cape route, an agency was established at Zanzibar which was put under the Sultan of Muscat. Thus, the Government of India was

called upon to take up responsibility for Aden and Zanzibar. With the rulers of Persian Gulf principalities (Kuwait, Bahrain, and the Trucial Sheikhdoms), the British government concluded a series of treaties. The Government of India was not a party to any of them.

The importance of these places increased when the Suez Canal opened in 1869 and, a little later, the 'scramble' for Africa started. London regarded control over Aden and Zanzibar as non-negotiable. But the issue was: who should pay for the establishments there? In 1883, London decided to take over Zanzibar by paying the cost of maintaining it. However, the Government of India was made to pay the subsidy to the Sultan of Muscat which it did until 1947. The British wanted to take over Aden also. But this could not be done because of financial implications. Meanwhile, the merchants of Bombay built up commercial interests there.

In 1902, the Welby Commission defined the region of concern in the Government of India's foreign policy as well as the geographical spread of the operations of the Indian army. It placed the areas around the Suez Canal including Egypt, the east coast of Africa as far as Zanzibar, questions affecting the Red Sea, the Arabian coast, the Persian Gulf, the islands of the Indian Ocean except Madagascar, and even questions affecting the Malaya peninsular and China in the orbit of the Government of India.[7] All the treaties were signed by the British government while the Government of India was made to share the recurring expenditure and paid for standing assets like land, buildings, and transport for legations. In addition, until 1933, the Indian army was used for the protection of British interests in this entire region without any financial obligation.[8] This amounted to a substantial saving for the British treasury.

On the whole, the First World War enhanced the international status of India and galvanized national consciousness. This led to the association of Indians with the task of administration in 1919. This also made Indians demand more funds for welfare activities. In this situation, the Government of India was compelled to heed the opinion of Indians in the legislature as well as outside as never before. During this war, at the time of expedition to Mesopotamia, the Government of India contemplated retention of Basra. But the prospect ended when this campaign failed. When the post-war peace settlement was being discussed at Paris, Indians began to entertain hopes of getting a mandate over Tangyanika or at least improvement of status for Indians settled there, in recognition of the role that the Indian army had played. The Government of India acquiesced in this proposal. But nothing came out of it. This came against the tense background of futile agitation from various public platforms in India on the issue of unequal treatment of Indians abroad, especially in Kenya.

The interest taken by the Government of India in establishing a colony, a mandate, or to procure equal rights for Indian emigrants have been seen as examples of a desire to extend the Indian sphere or as 'Indian sub-imperialism'. Behind these endeavors, the purpose of the Government of India was not to promote a particular line of policy or to acquire any grip over a strategic outstation. This was the result of a painful adjustment to post-war, post-reform realities or what might be described as compulsions of

governance. The Government of India wanted to avoid unwelcome agitation in the legislature and outside. The fact remains that the 'Empire of the Raj' was confined to the Aden Settlement and that too until 1937. London sought to ensure that relations in this sphere were conducted in ways complementary to imperial policy. In the case of taking over Aden, when the issue of introducing provincial autonomy came up, London decided to act because Aden was an offshoot of Bombay Presidency. In 1937, London took over Aden and it was made a Crown colony. When the Cabinet took the decision to take over Aden, the Government of India was not even informed. There is a proverb: 'He who pays the piper calls the tune.' But here, the Indian treasury paid the piper and London called the tune.[9]

Association with International Bodies

The impressive contribution of India to the First World War led to the emergence of India in the international arena. During the war, India was accepted into the Imperial War Conference and later the Imperial Conference. India signed the Treaty of Versailles and other peace treaties, and became an original member of the League along with other dominions. This assured India of membership of the International Labour Organization, the Permanent Court of International Justice, and many other bodies. The League Assembly admitted members from India and the dominions in their own right, acting for their own government. In making India join these bodies, the British hoped to underline the universality of the British Empire. In addition, they could get additional weightage in League councils in terms of votes. This caused resentment amongst European delegates.

India was the only non-self-governing member of the League. The Indian delegation to the League consisted of three members of which the majority was of Indians. The Indian government and its representatives were expected to promote interests assigned to them by the India Office. On the basis of their recorded speeches, they appeared eminently loyal to Britain, but they were also able to present the point of view of Indians. They raised their voice against injustice implicit in the budget of the League. India was made to contribute more funds to the League than any non-permanent member though almost all the projects taken up by the League were Europe-centered. Because of their efforts, in the early 1930s, India's contribution was reduced by 30 per cent. They also used these forums to press issues like equality of treatment for all humans and economic injustices implicit in the attitude of developed countries. They achieved a modicum of success.

After the Second World War, India was made a member of the United Nations Organization in October 1945 despite still being a colony of the British. India also participated in the Bretton Woods Conference held in July 1944 to regulate the international monetary and financial order.

Foreign Policy and the Nature of Colonial Rule

What were the motives of the British in creating and maintaining such a vast empire in India? The colonizers and the colonized have answered this question in diametrically opposed ways. Mainstream British historians and economists have persistently denied that Britain benefited from its Empire in anyway. But their attempts to explain the creation of this vast empire in terms such as the desire to civilize the Indians or to spread Christianity, personal ambitions, or the prestige of owning empire do not seem tenable, especially in view of the fact that ruling over India was an arduous task full of risks. However much in the background and ill-explored, power politics has an economic dimension. The British used the revenues of India for all expenditure on administration, maintenance of the India Office in London, the cost of suppressing all oppositional movements including the Revolt of 1857, the expenses of maintaining diplomatic missions in China, Iran, and other places, etc. The British maintained a large army in India paid out of the Indian treasury which was seen as an 'English barrack in oriental seas' and was used to implement Britain's grand strategy worldwide. Economically, India became a safe field for capital investment, a crucial element in the balance of payments, and key to the multilateral system of settlements that sustained the continued expansion of Britain's worldwide trade. British importers, financiers, and shippers made large profits and deposited them in England. Indian leaders and scholars look upon this as 'the drain of wealth' from India to Britain. According to their estimates, the tribute extracted from India fell between 5 and 10 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of India over a period of more than hundred years (Habib 1995: 304–46; Bagchi 2006: 13). They are convinced that domination over India brought significant benefits to the British. By arguing that the security of India was a powerful constituent of Britain's worldview and power, that the British took far-reaching precautions to defend the Indian Empire and the routes thereto, and that British policies in India were geared to prolong their stay, this study reiterates the views of Indian scholars that the British benefited tremendously from the Indian Empire famously called the 'jewel in the crown'.

The Raj Legacy

There has been a widespread perception within the educated elite in India that India's foreign policy begins with independence and the Partition of the Indian Empire into India and Pakistan. There is no doubt that the year 1947 marks a break—mainly in two directions. First, until 1947, India's foreign and defense policies were decided at London and were designed to serve the interests of the British. As already said, before 1947, the

foreign policy of the government of British India was the foreign policy of the British, for the British and by the British. After 1947, foreign policy decisions were taken by an elected government in New Delhi, and in the interest of the people of India. Secondly, during the freedom struggle, the nationalist leaders, especially of the Indian National Congress, took a keen interest in issues relating to foreign policy and freedom struggles in other countries. Moreover, though the leaders were aware that India was a poor country, they thought that India was a great country, and was too big to be a hanger-on to any other state, however powerful. After 1947, Third World radicalism and socialist orientation became the defining features of India's perspective of the world and decisively influenced its foreign policy.

At the same time, the legacy of 150 years of British rule could not be wiped away. As India chartered its course in world affairs, its new rulers could not entirely discard the Raj legacy. India inherited the territory bequeathed by the British and the Republic of India accepted that the inherited boundaries were legal and sacrosanct and had to be defended. India and Pakistan also accepted obligations under as many as 627 treaties, agreements, and conventions signed by the British with various countries.[10] India inherited the foreign policy establishment and institutional structure. It is important to note that initially the policy-makers came from those who had participated in or had watched closely the change of regime. Jawaharlal Nehru, free India's first Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, chose to follow the precedents of the previous government for conducting diplomacy, in the 'style' of diplomacy and some of the formulations of diplomacy. The heritage of involvement in international affairs also facilitated independent India's foreign relations.

Further, it could not be ignored that even after Partition, India loomed large in South Asia because of its size and central location. There was always a school of thought in the foreign policy establishment of the government of independent India that held that India was a legatee of Britain's role for peace and stability in South Asia. In many ways, New Delhi adopted from the British the notions of relations with states in India's immediate neighborhood. Many neighbors of India think that India is determined to play the role of a hegemon in its neighborhood. The term 'hegemon' tends to have unattractive connotations, yet India's weight in South Asia remains evident.

A lasting legacy of the Raj has been the delineation of the northern border. This was done after elaborate surveys. But today, this border constitutes the most dangerous border in the world. The Himalayas were always seen as constituting a natural and most formidable line of defense. But the frontiers of India, whether drawn after elaborate surveys as in the north, or hastily, as in the case of the lines drawn between India and Pakistan, were drawn arbitrarily. Issues of ethnicity, the desires of the people, or reasons relating to the economic viability of the region were totally ignored. Besides, many issues were left unaddressed. In the Aksai Chin area, India and China have different maps, both drawn by the British by 1900, to validate their claims. In the northeast, China has not accepted the McMahon Line. The result is that the Indo-China border is one of the most militarized boundary lines in the world. India's relations with Pakistan as well as China remain perpetually tense and the borderline between them often turns into a conflict zone.

Even in the twenty-first century, the legacy of the Raj has relevance for India. India's foreign policy is acquiring a new orientation today because new equations of power are emerging. India has grown from a peripheral player to a key participant at the top level of global diplomacy. It has experienced major shifts in economic policy that make it important to assess the region's linkages with the global economy (Mohan 2004). Here the British Empire, with its worldwide interests, can provide important leads. India has also emerged as the biggest consumer of gas from the Gulf, Central Asia, and South-East Asia. Being a dominant naval power, the British spoke only of defending the land frontier and did not have to bother about the naval defense of the Raj. It was only when the Japanese reached Mandalay during the Second World War that the British became concerned about naval weakness. But soon after this, they became involved in issues relating to transfer of power. After 1950, too, India had remained complacent about developing its maritime strength. Since the 1990s, efforts are being made to develop naval strength because of the desire to control the energy choke points leading out of or into the Indian Ocean, mainly the Straits of Malacca, the Straits of Hormuz, and the Bab el Mandeb at the head of the Red Sea.

In responding effectively to new diplomatic challenges, policy-makers, opinion shapers, and academicians have to pay greater attention to some of the old themes of British Indian foreign policy. An understanding of the foreign policy of the Raj provides the key.

Notes

1. The capital was shifted to Delhi in 1913. In 1927, the name 'New Delhi' was adopted.
2. Lansdowne to Sir Arthur Hardinge (Minister at Tehran), January 6, 1902, BDOW, vol. 4. No. 321a (London: HSMO).
3. 'Note on Future Relations of Great Britain and Japan', May 4, 1905, Sydenham Papers, Mss. 50836. See Mahajan (2002: 159).
4. Report by the Chiefs of Staff Committee, February 23, 1934, CID Papers, Cab. 6/6/352.
5. Note on 'India and the Mongolian Fringe', by O. K. Caroe, Foreign Secretary, Government of India, January 18, 1940, in Mehra (1980: Doc. 17, 112–13).
6. NA/UK, Cabinet Papers. A report of this meeting was sent by the Prime Minister to the King. See CAB 41/48/2 and CAB 41/32/65.
7. Final Report of the Royal Commission (Welby Commission) 1902, volume 4, p. 31, cited in Misra (1970: 336–7).
8. After 1933, the British government began to share the cost. On this see Gupta and Deshpande (2002: 228–69).
9. This section is based on Blyth (2003: 93–131).
10. Partition Proceedings, Report, No. IX, p. 11.

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CHAPTER 5

BEFORE MIDNIGHT

Views on International Relations, 1857–1947

RAHUL SAGAR

In his essay *Indian Strategic Thought*, George Tanham (1992: v) famously argued that political elites in India showed 'little evidence of having thought coherently or systematically about national strategy'. The 'situation may now be changing', he cautiously noted in 1992, but he was certain that the 'forces of culture and history' had 'worked against' the cultivation of a strategic mindset.[1] Though Tanham's claim has not gone unchallenged, relatively little has been done to substantiate the claim that, historically at least, India's elite did in fact think about strategic matters.[2] This brief chapter cannot remedy this lacuna, but it makes a start. In contrast with contemporary discussions on Indian strategic culture, which focus almost exclusively on the post-independence era, this chapter shows that India's political elites have been thinking about her place in the world for well over a century now.[3] Limitations of space mean that it is not possible to discuss every important viewpoint to be found in the pre-independence era.[4] Hence this chapter focuses on the worldviews that appear to have been the most influential.

Early Stirrings

The latter half of the nineteenth century witnessed the emergence of three distinct views on international relations. The first emphasized 'universal brotherhood' or the spiritual and moral unity of the human race. Among the more prominent spokesmen was the theologian Keshub Chandra Sen. In his 1886 lecture, 'Jesus Christ: Europe and Asia', Sen examined how Indians and Englishmen might regulate their relations, strained as they were in the wake of the 1857 Mutiny. 'It grieves me to find', he announced, that far from adhering 'strictly and literally to the doctrine of forgiveness inculcated by Christ', Englishmen dismissed the doctrine as an expression of 'misguided sentimentalism'. They knew too well, he bemoaned, that by 'systematically returning love for enmity,

they would too soon jeopardize all their temporal interests' (Sen 1870: 40–2). Initially Sen expressed the hope that diligent moral education would give rise to the day 'when race-antagonism shall perish, and strife, discord, and all manner of unbrotherly feeling shall for ever pass away, and harmony shall prevail among us all' (Sen 1870: 46).[5] Subsequently, in 'Asia's Message to Europe', a lecture delivered in Calcutta's Town Hall in 1883, he offered a more thoroughgoing response. Noting that 'Europe's aggressive civilization' had rent Europe itself with conflict, Sen made the case for peaceful coexistence (Sen 1904: 51). Human history showed, he contended, that there 'is a natural and an irresistible tendency in man's progressive nature towards social fellowship'. The evolution of humans from being solitary brutes in the state of nature into members of families and then villages and towns and eventually states revealed that civilization was on the side of 'what is broad and world-wide'. Groups with contrary interests appreciated communal life because associations enriched their lives culturally and materially. But communal life could only be maintained when communities were 'not destructive, but constructive', i.e. when they allowed groups to maintain as well as expand their existing sympathies and identities (Sen 1904: 77–9). Hence, if Europeans wanted to be on the side of civilization rather than barbarism, Sen concluded, they ought to mimic Asia's instinctive pluralism. 'Let us all march then into broader fields and larger intercourses', he proclaimed, 'till we form a blessed and world-wide community of God's children, for that is indeed the destiny of our race' (Sen 1904: 117, 80).

Perhaps the most influential of such pleas came from Swami Vivekananda, who saw Hinduism as being uniquely placed to further 'universal brotherhood'. Europe, he observed in 1897, was trying to understand 'how much a man can have, how much more power a man can possess by hook or by crook, by some means or other'. But this was to chase a mirage for history showed 'nations rising and falling almost every century—starting up from nothingness, making vicious play for a few days, and then melting' (Vivekananda 1955a: 205). Far preferable, then, were 'mildness, gentleness, forbearance, toleration, sympathy, and brotherhood', as these qualities alone would allow societies and nations to accommodate differences of interest and opinion that are a part and parcel of collective human existence. However, as these qualities could not triumph without the conquest of greed and desire, it was vital to learn to renounce. 'Giving up the senses', Vivekananda asserted, is what 'makes a nation survive' (Vivekananda 1955a: 205). And this was where India stood out. 'The foundation of her being, the *raison d'être* of her very existence', he wrote in 'India's Message to the World', was 'the spiritualisation of the human race' (Vivekananda 1955b: 261). This was because Hindu philosophy was best suited to impart the 'unworldliness' that nations needed to learn before there could be peace. The effects of this philosophy appeared clear to Vivekananda: India, he repeatedly observed, was 'the only nation that never went beyond its frontiers to cut the throats of its neighbours' (Vivekananda 1955c: 404).

A second line of thought in this period drew on classical texts that had recently come into wider circulation. These texts, including *Hitopadesa, Manu Smriti, Nitisara, Agni Purana, Vishnu Smriti*, and the *Arthashastra*, offered advice that diverged sharply from the advice offered by Sen and Vivekananda. Instead of faith in moral progress,

these texts expressed a principled conservatism founded on the insight that men and their motives are more often base than noble. Compare, for instance, Sen's and Vivekananda's praise of the 'mild Hindu' with Book VII of the *Manu Smriti* where rulers are instructed to 'strive to gain' what they have not yet gained, and to 'carefully preserve' what they have already gained, which can be accomplished by the ruler who is 'ever ready to strike', whose secrets are 'constantly concealed', who ceaselessly explores 'the weaknesses of his foe', and who considers any 'immediate neighbour' as hostile (Doniger 1991, VII: 68). That said, it would be a grave error to read such passages as condoning the use of violence and fraud simply for the sake of acquiring or maintaining political power. These texts hold that such methods are permissible only insofar as they are used to preserve a well-governed state—a point of no small interest to early twentieth-century readers.[6]

An important conduit for these classical ideas was Swami Dayanand Saraswati's 1875 *Satyarth Prakash*, which outlined the *Manu Smriti*'s key lessons on statecraft (Saraswati 1908). But the transmission of these ideas was limited in a number of respects. Saraswati, the founder of the barely tolerated Arya Samaj, appears to have refrained from commenting on the most incendiary passages. His successors followed this lead, focusing on his many, popular writings challenging the social and religious orthodoxies of the day. The blunt advice offered by these classical texts was also highlighted by scholars such as Rajendra Lal Mitra and Manmatha Nath Dutt. But they discounted the advice on offer, viewing it as a byproduct of the bloody times during which these texts were framed (Kamandaki 1861: 3–4). This dismissive view would only start to change around the turn of the twentieth century when these classical texts would attract the attention of militant nationalists like Aurobindo Ghosh.

A third line of thought was liberal in flavor. Its proponents included Dadabhai Naroji, G. V. Joshi, Pherozshah Mehta, Dinshaw Wacha, and Gopal Krishna Gokhale, all of whom sought to temper the Raj's foreign policies. A key demand here was that the British refrain from stoking the Great Game. The 'only safe policy', the Indian National Congress firmly declared in 1898, was for the Raj to keep within the 'natural limits' of the country (Zaidi 1987: 66–7). Congress elites also urged the British to show greater decency in its overseas dealings. Starting with Naroji's famous 1880 essay, 'The Moral Poverty of India', they regularly called on the British to withdraw from the opium trade with China, which was a 'sin on England's head, and a curse on India for her share in being the instrument' (Naroji 1887: 476). Concern also began to be expressed routinely for Indian settlers abroad who were subject to 'invidious and humiliating distinctions', and pressure was placed on the British to 'relieve' the settlers of the 'disabilities imposed on them' (Zaidi 1987: 111, 119, 157, 194). Above all, Congress elites emphasized that India's pressing social needs ought to trump the Raj's 'militarism' (Gokhale 1906: 831). Repeatedly in the first decades of its existence, Congress urged that 'military and other unproductive expenditure be reduced, and larger amounts be spent in promoting the welfare and progress of the people' (Zaidi 1987: 18, 47, 66–7, 81–2, 107, 142).

A Moral Nationalism

At the close of the nineteenth century, an increasingly militant form of nationalism came to the fore. The defining feature of this movement was its willingness to countenance violence, a stance justified by reference to the idea that political life is governed by its own morality. This was, of course, a central claim of the classical texts on statecraft, and some prominent figures in the movement made this connection explicit, none more so than Bal Gangadhar Tilak whose *Gita Rahasya* argued that the moral lesson of the *Gita* was that one's salvation depended not merely on devotion and knowledge, but also on action, i.e. a willingness to engage in righteous violence (Tilak 1935).

The most fascinating work in this genre is Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay's 1888 *Dharmatattva*. This remarkable dialogue focuses on whether patriotism or the willingness to fight for one's country is essential to human happiness. The answer:

> Just as dogs in the rural markets snatch morsels from one another, peoples whether they are civilized or not are despoiling one another's property. A strong people is always ready to fall upon the weaker ones. Hence there can be no self-protection without protecting one's own country. (Chattopadhyay 1977: 54)

Dharmatattva was not, however, a simple call to arms. Having observed that Europe owed its strength to patriotism, the dialogue argued that Europeans should *not* be copied because the truest form of patriotism lies in 'love for the entire world'. Should there be a clash between the good of one's own society and that of another, then the appropriate way to proceed, the dialogue implied, was to calculate which outcome would produce the greatest benefit for the greatest number (Chattopadhyay 1977: 147). This path alone allowed one to reconcile national devotion with a love of mankind. Hindus were especially capable of following this path, the dialogue concluded, because their theology sought the universal rather than the particular.

Dharmatattva is striking because it shows one of the more vigorous Indian reactions to British imperialism voicing support for an eminently moral interaction with other peoples and for a defensive use of force. It is not unusual in this respect. Broadly, the same thought process can be discerned in Aurobindo Ghosh's influential corpus. Inspired by Japan's rise, Aurobindo warned his countrymen in a 1907 essay 'National Development and Foreign Rule', that a nation 'must develop military and political greatness and activity, intellectual and aesthetic greatness and activity, commercial greatness and activity, moral sanity and vigour', for it 'cannot sacrifice any of these functions of the organism without making itself unfit for the struggle for life and finally succumbing and perishing under the pressure of more highly organised nations' (Ghosh 1997a: 363). Aurobindo also explicitly defended militant methods in 'The Doctrine of Passive Resistance' and 'The Morality of Boycott', which appeared in 1907 and 1909 respectively. 'A certain class of minds shrink from aggressiveness as if it were a sin', he wrote in the latter. Their cry is to 'heal hate by love' and to 'slay sin by righteousness'. But political action

ought to be governed not by 'the Brahmanical duty of saintly sufferance' but rather by the 'morality of the Kshatriya' (Ghosh 1997a: 1118). This morality, he explained, counsels that 'love has a place in politics, but it is the love for one's country, for one's countrymen, for the glory, greatness and happiness of the race' (Ghosh 1997a: 1118–20).

These were dangerous words, no doubt. But a close reading shows that, like Bankimchandra, Aurobindo ultimately thought that violence was 'unrighteous when used wantonly' (Ghosh 1997a: 1120–1). This point is developed in 'Asiatic Democracy' and 'The Asiatic Role', where Aurobindo asserted that India's ultimate mission was to point humanity toward 'the true source of human liberty, human equality, human brotherhood', namely, a recognition of the 'divine equality of the world', which taught man to be 'brother to the whole world' and to serve 'all men as his brothers by the law of love, by the law of justice' (Ghosh 1997a: 931–2, 1019–1). This thought was elaborated still further in 'The Message of India':

> It is an inferior and semi-savage morality which gives up only to gain and makes selfishness the basis of ethics. To give up one's small individual self and find the larger self in others, in the nation, in humanity, in God, that is the law of Vedanta. That is India's message. Only she must not be content with sending it, she must rise up and live it before all the world so that it may be proved a possible law of conduct both for men and nations. (Ghosh 1997b: 55)

Critiques

By the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, growing domestic unease over the political violence unleashed by militant nationalists, and mounting concern about international conflict over colonial possessions, opened the door to new modes and ideas. Hereupon entered Mohandas Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore who, though united in their criticism of the international state system, offered markedly different advice on how India ought to conduct itself in the international sphere.

Gandhi's earliest salvo on the subject came in *Hind Swaraj,* where he argued that India's subjugation was the product not of her powerlessness but of her pusillanimity. True strength, he urged, lay not in the capacity to employ 'brute force', which usually proved counterproductive, but in the 'absence of fear', a state of mind that allowed victims to passively resist and even to pity the aggressor. A society capable of acting in this manner would discover that 'in the majority of cases, if not, indeed, in all, the force of love and pity is infinitely greater than the force of arms' (Gandhi 1908: 72–3). Hence, Gandhi concluded, it would be a mistake to imitate Europe, whose 'irreligious' focus on 'bodily welfare' had left her lacking genuine 'courage' (Gandhi 1908: 63).

Gandhi expanded on these ideas in 'Ahimsa', an essay published in 1916, where he distinguished between negative and positive conceptions of non-violence. Whereas the former involved abstaining from physical violence, the latter involved having the

courage to resist evil (Gandhi 1922: 285). The latter conception, it turned out, was the more sacred one; indeed it might even enjoin violence. As Gandhi wrote in his 1920 essay 'Doctrine of the Sword', 'where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence, I would advise violence'(Gandhi 1922: 789). Such a tragic outcome could be avoided though by escaping the helplessness that justified the use of violence. This logic explains Gandhi's efforts to recruit on behalf of the British during the First World War. If Indians demonstrated a willingness to fight, he thought, it would show the British that Indians were their subjects by choice rather than out of cowardice. Put another way, for Gandhi the point of learning to use arms was not to bolster national power but to humble the British (Gandhi 1922: 431). As he later put it, 'abstinence is forgiveness only when there is the power to punish; it is meaningless when it pretends to proceed from a helpless creature' (Gandhi 1922: 789).

The horrors of the Second World War did not change Gandhi's views. True, he called on the Allies to defend India, but only because India was, he thought, genuinely helpless. The gravity of the Japanese threat—a people who listened 'to no appeal but to the sword'—justified the use of force (Gandhi 1956: 374). Since India lacked the capacity to use force, it was entitled to appeal to the Allies. Even so, Gandhi continued to advocate non-violent resistance, informing Chiang Kai-shek that his own faith in the practice was 'as firm as ever' (Gandhi 1956: 353–4). That is, he continued to believe that those who had the ability to resist with force ought to resist without using force, as only such a sacrifice signaled the presence of genuine moral courage. As he instructed the British in 1940:

> I would like you to lay down the arms you have as being useless for saving you or humanity. You will invite Herr Hitler and Signor Mussolini to take what they want of the countries you call your possessions ... You will give all these but neither your souls, nor your minds ... If they do not give you free passage out, you will allow yourself man, woman and child, to be slaughtered, but you will refuse to owe allegiance to them. (Gandhi 1956: 345)

The other important critic in this period was Tagore, who was driven by concern for humanity, which to him implied concern for society, because society allowed individuals to naturally 'develop ideals of life in cooperation with one another' (Tagore 1917: 19–20). Given this worldview Tagore was, not surprisingly, troubled by aspects of modernity that also troubled Gandhi—above all the exuberant materialism of contemporary Europe. Tagore confronted this issue most directly in *Nationalism*, a collection of influential lectures delivered toward the end of the First World War, that focused on the abnormalities produced by the modern nation state. The purpose of these artificial institutions, he argued, was to combine individuals in the pursuit of power and riches; the consequence being the destruction of the bonds that form naturally within and between peoples. 'In the West', he declared, 'the national machinery of commerce and politics turns out neatly compressed bales of humanity which have their use and high market value; but they are bound in iron hoops, labelled and separated off with scientific care and precision' (Tagore 1917: 16–17). The withering away of natural bonds, Tagore feared,

opened the door to excess. There was, he acknowledged, a response to this fear, namely, the balance of power. It was widely believed, he noted, that 'these machines will come into an agreement, for their mutual protection, based upon a conspiracy of fear' (Tagore 1917: 44–5). But Tagore was not convinced that greed was rational or could be neatly contained. 'Do you believe', he asked audiences at the height of the Great War, 'that evil can be permanently kept in check by competition with evil, and that conference of prudence can keep the devil chained in its makeshift cage of mutual agreement?' (Tagore 1917: 57).

As he searched for remedies to this problem Tagore never dismissed the West. Europe, he noted, had 'seen noble minds who have ever stood up for the rights of man irrespective of color and creed'. These were examples well worth following. 'When we truly know the Europe which is great and good', he wrote, 'we can effectively save ourselves from the Europe which is mean and grasping' (Tagore 1917: 107). He was not optimistic though that the West, drunk on power and riches, would heed its own best example. This is why he was drawn—famously so—to Asian civilizations, which remained, he thought, 'spiritual and based upon all the varied and deeper relations of humanity' (Tagore 1917: 85).

But who in Asia held the answer? As China and Japan seemed to already be slipping away from their civilizational moorings, India above all offered hope. A concern for 'natural regulation of human relationships' lay at the heart of India's civilization, Tagore argued (Tagore 1917: 15). The establishment of political relationships, by contrast, had been neglected, especially externally. India had 'never sallied forth for domination, nor scrambled for spoils', Tagore insisted in *Greater India*. India had sent out 'only her messages of peace and good will' (Tagore 1921: 30). Thus if India could stay true to herself, her example alone would offer the world 'a basis of unity which is not political' (Tagore 1917: 119–20). But unlike Vivekananda and Gandhi, Tagore did not assume that India had all the answers to the world's problems. 'It does not hurt my pride to acknowledge', he declared in *Creative Unity*, that 'in the present age, Western humanity has received its mission to be the teacher of the world; that her science, through the mastery of laws of nature, is to liberate human souls from the dark dungeon of matter' (Tagore 1922: 98). In the event, the way forward was to embrace cosmopolitanism: 'I am not for thrusting off Western civilization and becoming segregated in our independence', he wrote; instead, '[l]et us have a deep association' (Tagore 1917: 130–1).

Sharp Divergences

Just as Japan's victory over Russia in 1905 had fired an earlier generation with patriotism, the experience of the First World War—and the failure of the League of Nations in particular—prompted skepticism in the following generation. Out of this background emerged two intellectual movements. The first was Hindu nationalism, whose most articulate spokesman was Vinayak Savarkar. Savarkar consistently praised as an ideal outcome the kind of worldwide federation previously called for by Vivekananda and

Aurobindo. But unlike them, Savarkar thought—in part because of what the world had witnessed during the Great War—that the human tendency toward parochialism and selfishness made conflict between nations inevitable. Political life was scarred, he said, by an incessant 'terrible struggle for existence', which unfortunately made 'survival of the fittest' the rule in nature (Savarkar 1984a: 15).

This worldview led Savarkar to advocate on behalf of balance of power politics. 'The sanest policy for us, which practical politics demand', he asserted, 'is to befriend those who are likely to serve our country's interests in spite of any "ism" they follow for themselves, and to befriend only so long as it serves our purpose' (Savarkar 1984a: 81). It also led him to call for the cultivation of a martial ethic. This was, in part, to dispel the idea that Hindus were a mild race. Hence, we find Savarkar celebrating the decision of the British to send Indian soldiers to the battlefields of Europe (Savarkar 1984b: 12–13).

The more immediate factor motivating Savarkar's militarism was the need he felt to combat Gandhi's doctrine of non-violence. This 'doctrinal plague', Savarkar argued, had 'sought to kill the very martial instinct of the Hindu race and had succeeded to an alarming extent in doing so' (Savarkar 1984a: 86). His response was to challenge Gandhi by drawing in no small measure on classical ideas about statecraft. 'We denounce your doctrine of absolute non-violence not because we are less saintly but because we are more sensible than you are', he thundered. 'Relative non-violence is our creed', he declared, 'therefore, we worship the defensive sword as the first saviour of man' (Savarkar 1984a: 85). This reference to self-defense should not be overlooked. Savarkar never promoted an expansionary brand of nationalism. Rather, like Bankimchandra and Aurobindo, he believed that martial spiritedness would serve to deter potential aggressors. The same logic explains his advocacy on behalf of an exclusionary nationalism; his objective here was to provide Indians with a corporate identity that could motivate them to rally in opposition to external aggression. As he defensively explained in *Essentials of Hindutva*:

> As long as other communities in India or in the world are not respectively planning India first or mankind first, but all are busy in organizing offensive and defensive alliances and combinations on entirely narrow racial or religious or national basis, so long, at least, so long O Hindus, strengthen if you can those subtle bonds that like nerve threads bind you in one organic social being. (Savarkar 2003: 141)

The second intellectual movement sparked by the First World War was anti-imperialism, which received a strong fillip from the failure of the League of Nations to extend genuine self-determination to colonial peoples. This movement was missionary in nature. It portrayed India's subjugation as part of a broader story of European exploitation, and hence sought India's commitment to pursuing decolonization everywhere in the interests of freedom and peace. The most influential proponent of this view was Jawaharlal Nehru, who became ever more vocal on the subject as he moved up the Congress hierarchy. In 1929, delivering his first Presidential address, he drove home the idea that India's struggle

against British imperialism was 'part of a world movement', and that India ignored foreign events at her 'peril' (Nehru 1936: 14, 16). He observed:

> Peace can only come when the causes of war are removed. So long as there is the domination of one country over another, or the exploitation of one class by another, there will always be attempts to subvert the existing order, and no stable equilibrium can endure. Out of imperialism and capitalism peace can never come. (Nehru 1936: 24)

Nehru developed these ideas further in his 1933 manifesto 'Whither India?' The problem that had 'the world by the throat', he wrote there, was the 'crisis of capitalism', brought about by the 'ill distribution of the world's wealth' (Nehru 1934: 11). This growing crisis—as evidenced by the Great Depression—boded ill for the world. 'To the hard-pressed imperialist Powers seeking frantically for areas of economic expansion', he warned, 'Asia still offers a field'. This made Asia the 'main field of conflict between nationalism and imperialism' (Nehru 1934: 16–17). India, Nehru asserted, had a crucial role to play here. India ought to pursue, both at home and abroad, the only sustainable response to capitalism, namely, to push toward 'the great human goal of social and economic equality, to the ending of all exploitation of nation by nation and class by class, to national freedom within the framework of an international co-operative Socialist world federation' (Nehru 1934: 24).

Over the following decade Nehru came to be especially troubled by the rise of fascism. In his 1936 Presidential address, he emphasized that the colonized needed to be wary of both imperialism and fascism, as the latter was merely an intensification of the exploitative impulses of the former. He pledged India's support to combating both these tendencies: 'To the progressive forces of the world, to those who stand for human freedom and the breaking of political and social bonds, we offer our full co-operation in their struggle against imperialism and Fascist reaction, for we realize that our struggle is a common one' (Nehru 1936: 106). And now, more concretely than before, Nehru aligned India with Soviet Russia, describing the 'unfolding' of this 'new civilization and a new order' as 'the most promising feature of our dismal age'; the 'spread to other lands' of this 'new order' would 'put an end to the wars and conflicts which capitalism feeds' (Nehru 1936: 83).

The outbreak of the Second World War only reinforced Nehru's convictions. The crisis 'that has overtaken Europe', he stated, 'is not of Europe only and will not pass like other crises or wars leaving the essential structure of the present day world intact' (AICC 1940: 16–17). Now more than ever Nehru emphasized the special role that India was bound to play in reorganizing the world. As the Nehru-drafted Congress's 1939 'Statement on the War Crisis' boldly declared:

> India is the crux of the problem, for India has been the outstanding example of imperialism and no refashioning of the world can succeed which ignores this vital problem. With her vast resources she must play an important part in any scheme of world reorganisation. (AICC 1940: 17)

Going forward, India ought not to be content with a 'narrow nationalism', Nehru warned, for 'freedom today is indivisible and every attempt to retain imperialist domination in any part of the world will lead inevitably to fresh disaster' (AICC 1940: 16). Hence the most appropriate foreign policy for India was an activist one:

> A free democratic India will gladly associate herself with other free nations for mutual defence against aggression and for economic co-operation. She will work for the establishment of a real world order based on freedom and democracy, utilising the world's knowledge and resources for the progress and advancement of humanity. (AICC 1940: 16)

At Midnight: Debates in the Constituent Assembly

It has been claimed that there was, at independence, a 'Nehruvian consensus' on the ends and means of foreign policy (Cohen 2002: 37).[7] The ends were 'idealistic', focused on anti-imperialism and world peace, and the means were 'principled', in the form of non-alignment and non-violence. Given the history traced so far, the implausibility of this claim should now be clear. There were too many conflicting ideas in circulation to permit such a consensus. An examination of the debates of the Constituent Assembly easily dispels any doubts that remain on this count.[8]

The Constituent Assembly addressed the subject of international relations on two occasions. The first involved deliberations on Article 51, which provides that

> The State shall endeavour to—
> (a) promote international peace and security;
> (b) maintain just and honourable relations between nations;
> (c) foster respect for international law and treaty obligations in the dealings of organised peoples with one another; and
> (d) encourage settlement of international disputes by arbitration.

These provisions, widely viewed as homages to Gandhi, were strongly supported by delegates to the Constituent Assembly. B. M. Gupta and M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar, for instance, praised the use of arbitration as a 'substitute for war' (CAD 1948: 603). Meanwhile, B. H. Khardekar and Biswanath Das commended Article 51 for neatly encapsulating India's 'spiritual heritage':

> The mission of India is the mission of peace. Right from Ram Tirth and Vivekananda down to Tagore, and Gandhiji, if he has done anything, has very much strengthened it. Throughout history, it is not because we have been weak but because it has been in our blood that we have been carrying on this mission

> of peace. Non-violence is in the soil and in the heart of every Indian. (CAD 1948: 601)

Others thought Article 51 did not go far enough. Damodar Swarup, one of the two Socialist Party members in the Assembly, objected that it ignored the continued weakness of 'oppressed and backward people', a state of affairs that encouraged the nefarious activities of 'the exploiter and the blood-sucker'—the capitalist and the imperialist—thereby 'paving the way for regional and international warfare' (CAD 1948: 600). The mordant Gandhian, K. T. Shah, criticized Article 51, which had been placed in the non-justiciable part of the constitution, for making 'vague promises' instead of firm moral commitments. The need of the hour, he stated, was to 'pledge ourselves, as a people against any form of warfare, and for ever stand to maintain and uphold peace and international security for all countries of the world including our own' (CAD 1948: 599).

But other delegates saw Article 51—and their fellow members' demands for more expansive moral commitments—as woolly-headed. The sharpest criticism came from a Congressman, the acerbic former military officer Mahavir Tyagi, who argued that Article 51 represented little more than a 'pious wish'. How could 'anybody arbitrate in such matters', he asked, when powerful nations would not accept an unfavorable outcome? (CAD 1948: 604). This was why international arbitration was invariably followed by the use of 'guns and aeroplanes' (CAD 1948: 605). Tyagi was equally dismissive of calls for disarmament. Since powerful nations were not likely to submit to arbitration, he warned, India had to be prepared to use force when necessary:

> [I]f we want to maintain peace and seek to maintain just and honourable relations between nations, then I say it is not possible if we remain … merely a meadow of green grass for bulls to come and graze freely … what we want is armament, both of will and weapons, moral armament as well as physical armament. We should see to it that our nation is militarily strong … That should be the directive that we should give to our future government of India if only to achieve our laudable objective of 'world peace'. (CAD 1948: 605)

A further window into the minds of the delegates is provided by the extended debate over India's membership in the Commonwealth of Nations. Pressed to justify this policy, Nehru argued before the Assembly that Commonwealth membership was in keeping both with the principle of non-violence (since the Commonwealth provided a forum at which to peacefully resolve differences) and with the principle of autonomy (since Commonwealth membership did not oblige India to defend fellow members like England or South Africa). What is most striking about the ensuing debate is not so much the criticism emanating from the left, but the remarks made by those who rose to *defend* Nehru's policy. These remarks disclose ideas about the nature of international relations that differed markedly from those expressed by the Prime Minister.

To begin with, no small number of speakers that rose to support India's continued membership in the Commonwealth argued that even though India ought to strive to maintain peace between the West and the Soviet Union, in the event of a confrontation she ought to side with Western democracies. As Begum Aizaz Rasul bluntly declared:

> Indian ideology is opposed to communism. There is no doubt that we do not want communism in our country, and we know that Britain and the countries of the Commonwealth are also opposed to communism. Therefore, that is also a common factor between the two. (CAD 1949: 61)

A second difference with Nehru followed from the first. The Commonwealth's defenders argued that since neither neutrality nor non-alignment could fully ensure peace and stability, India ought to be prepared to obtain peace through external and internal balancing. 'It is very easy to talk about world peace', K. M. Munshi noted, and to praise 'collective security'. But collective security 'is not a mantra to charm serpents with ... It really implies preparation, defensive preparations, standardisation of weapons, co-ordinated research and planning and industrial co-operation between nations on a very large scale' (CAD 1949: 47). What India's circumstances really demanded, then, speakers like Alladi Krishnaswami Ayyar and Kameshwar Singh went on to stress, was a willingness to enter into profitable relationships such as those offered by membership in the Commonwealth:

> Both history and geography entitle her [India] to ensure the peace of the world. But she can discharge that function only if she is strong both militarily and economically. She can be made so by the co-operation of the Commonwealth countries and America. (CAD 1949: 60)

And if allying with distasteful but nonetheless potentially useful partners like South Africa and Australia was much too bitter a pill for Indians to digest, Frank Anthony observed, then the alternative remedy was not isolation and withdrawal (as the Gandhian H. V. Kamath and the radical socialist Maulana Mohani had proposed) but instead to build up India's strength so that she could enforce her preferred policies:

> our policy must be broad-based, and that India's strength should be built up most rapidly. It may take us five years; it may take us ten years. But any realist, any sober person must realise that in the world we are living in today, in the final analysis, one's strength is measured exactly by one's military might. (CAD 1949: 65)

These voices were on the losing side in 1949 because the Congress Party had absolute control over the Constituent Assembly. But they were not stray voices; they represented long-standing worldviews that had strong support, both inside and outside the Congress Party. It is not surprising, then, that these worldviews resurfaced—indeed came to fore—as the Congress Party's influence, and Nehru's authority in particular, began to wane over the following decade.

Conclusion

The chapter has challenged the notion that, historically at least, India's political elites failed to think coherently and systematically about national strategy. The reality, we have now seen, is that elites thought about—and disagreed over—the nature of international relations. Such disagreement is not unique to India of course. It can be found in other societies too, including the United States. What is perhaps distinctive about the Indian experience is the extent to which *moral politik* ideas have had the edge, at least in the period leading up to independence. By the same coin, the history canvassed here implies that the 'realism' that is said to be seeping into contemporary Indian deliberations on international relations is not a radical development—it is in fact an iteration of long-standing critiques directed at the more reckless tendencies of modern Indian political thought (Mohan 2004: xxi–xxii).

This essay has not examined *why* India's political elites adopted the moralizing stance that they did prior to 1947. This may have been, as K. Subrahmanyam (1999: xvii) once suggested, a product of their exclusion from officialdom, which denied them contact with the sobering cut and thrust of international diplomacy. It may have been because these elites thought that national unity was all that was needed to ensure security and prestige. At any rate, one visible consequence of this history—as witnessed in the homilies enshrined in Article 51—was a collective failure to publicly reckon with the responsibilities of statehood. That this collective failure was the *outcome* of thinking about international relations—and not evidence of the *absence* of thinking—is what I have tried to convey here.

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Notes

1. Also see Harsh V. Pant, 'Indian Strategic Culture: The Debate and Its Consequences', in Scott (2011).
2. An interesting critique is W. P. S. Sidhu, 'Of Oral Traditions and Ethnocentric Judgements', in Bajpai and Mattoo (1996). The rare exceptions to have addressed the historical record are Dixit (2004) and Prasad (1962). These are thought provoking and valuable contributions, but they are more in the vein of general overviews rather than detailed scholarly examinations.

3. The most well-known contemporary analyses are Cohen (2002: ch. 2) and Kanti Bajpai, 'Indian Strategic Culture', in Bajpai and Pant (2013: ch. 3). Also see Singh (1999).
4. For instance I have had to pass over the views of important figures like Mohammad Ali Jauhar and Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari from the Muslim League, and M. N. Roy and Abani Mukherji from the Communist Party of India.
5. Also see Sen (1871: 145–6).
6. This point receives only passing mention in Gilboy and Heginbotham (2012: 31).
7. For a perceptive critique see Mohan (2009: 149–50).
8. This section draws on Sagar and Panda (forthcoming).

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CHAPTER 6

ESTABLISHING THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

PALLAVI RAGHAVAN

In 1947, Nehru established the Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations to steer his vision of a new, independent foreign policy. This ministry was to be directly under his control, serve as the instrument for establishing friendly contact with capitals around the world, and send emissaries to set up partnerships which could potentially be of economic, political, or military benefit to India. He thus proclaimed a policy of friendship towards all nations, of non-alignment with the major power blocs of the time, and a special affinity with newly decolonised nations. To the Constituent Assembly he declared: 'We wish for peace. We do not want to fight any nation if we can help it. The only possible real objective is that we, in common with other nations, can cooperate in building up some kind of world structure, call it One World, call it what you will.'[1]

But if this ministry was designed to implement a foreign policy that arose from scratch, and reflect the Government of India's newly independent status, it was not ideally placed to do so. Its antecedents placed it at the very heart of the operations of the British Empire, and the traditions it drew from had often been fashioned with the aim of bolstering the strategic position of the British Empire in the subcontinent (Bandopadhyay 1970; Vasudevan and Sarkar 2007). The institutions, as well as individuals, that implemented India's initial foreign policy had been heavily invested in the shaping of India's international positioning in the decades before the transfer of power. At the time of the Second World War, for instance, the officials who occupied these positions were Sir Girija Shankar Bajpai in the United States, Y. D. Gundevia in Burma, Krishna Menon in London, and K. M. Pannikar in China—all of whom were to play critical roles in the fashioning of India's foreign policy in the decade after Partition. Although some policy goals may have shifted in direction and orientation in the years following the transfer of power, it is nonetheless important to remember that patterns of continuity, within the institutional structure they were shaped in, were very eeply etched (Ray 2011).

This chapter will consider the continuities of early activities of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) across both sides of the dates of the transfer of power. In fact, the tasks that this new ministry was entrusted with had preoccupied the Government of India for several decades, and methods adopted for adminstering them tapped into several well-established practices laid down by the colonial government. The question that this chapter will seek to answer is: what was the inherited wisdom and institutional memory that was drawn upon by the Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations in 1947? How did the methods that were fashioned to administer the external relations of British India continue into, and impact, the thinking on foreign relations after the transfer of power? This chapter will examine how questions relating to the Government of India's external relations were handled in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and evaluate the impact these had on the institutional assumptions of the MEA in 1947. I will argue that the tendency to see 1947 as a critical date for a substantial shift in the foreign policy activities of India may be questioned; and that a more useful lens for the analysis of the early ministry's activities might be through examining the decisions to retain and preserve its inherited institutional thinking. In particular, I will study the precedents laid down by the Political Service for the ministry's initial contacts with neighbouring countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, and Myanmar. I will also look at the deliberations which went into its organizational structuring after the transfer of power; as well as the continuation of methods devised for the regulation of migration, travel, as well as citizenship during the First and Second World Wars. Grappling with these questions also constituted the bulk of the day-to-day and humdrum preoccupations of the early ministry. My broader aim is to argue that the structures of administering the colonial government's external relations were continued by its successor as a matter of deliberate choice, despite the voicing of articulate opposition and equally plausible arguments made in favour of alternative arrangements.

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Setting up a viable foreign policy demanded the immediate attention of the leaders of a newly independent India even amidst the catastrophic violence and upheaval of the Partition. Arguments for continuation in the infrastructure of India's external relations were persuasively advanced from a number of quarters during the transfer of power. This included a framework which could incorporate India's current international standing in terms of membership of various international organizations and treaties and agreements already entered into, as well as for the retention of a structure based on the prevalent strategic wisdom of the interwar decades. Quite apart from the British government which, as has repeatedly been pointed out, had a vested interest in keeping the existing shape of the Government of India intact (see, for instance, Singh 1993; Wainwright 1994), such arguments were also made within the Congress and Muslim League, and by bureaucrats who were familiar with their politics (Dutt 1977; Gundevia 1984; Mehta 2010). Indeed, many officials in the external affairs ministry, with their long-standing experience in foreign affairs and governance, actively worked to retain continuities in the structure of government, a position which, if successful, would also ensure their own continued influence. These men lobbied for the transfer of power and,

in some cases, for the Partition, in the pursuit of their own professional interests within two new governments in which their own roles would be critical. In many ways, therefore, New Delhi's post-1947 worldview was fashioned from a set of beliefs designed to give India a strategic and economic coherence according to the political dictates of the nineteenth century. Indeed, the study of the shaping of newly established foreign policy establishments would necessarily include a study of the continuities with the institutional thinking of the British Empire (Raja Mohan 2012; Mahajan 2002).

Administrative arrangements for the subcontinent's external relations were as old as the colonial government itself: until 1843, matters relating to its external concerns were looked after by the 'Secret and Political Department'; and thereafter, until the onset of the First World War, by the 'Foreign Department'. In 1936, the Department of External Affairs, the precursor to the MEA, had been fashioned from a wing of the Indian Political Service. By 1947, the MEA found itself concerned with policy in two concentric circles: while one circle related to dealings with the immediate neighbourhood, the other related to the shaping of relations with the rest of the world on the basis of a newly established independent identity. The 'inner' circle of policy, however, frequently drew from precedents that had been established for many decades. Many of its immediate tasks lay in disentangling—but also consolidating—the divisions between 'internal' and 'external' concerns—within the Empire, the subcontinent, as well as within itself. A critical example of this was the inheritance of the adminstrative duties over the Northeast by the MEA, on the basis of the region having thus far been governed as a 'buffer' zone between British and Chinese spheres of influence. The arrangement continued for several years after independence, ending only in 1965, when adminstrative control over the area was transferred to the Home Ministry.

Although many of the positions that these institutions took were calibrated to suit Britain's imperial interests, the Government of India nonetheless had an important role in the formulation and implementation of the minutiae of these external policies. As Robert Blyth (2003) points out in his study of the Government of India's relations with territories along its frontiers, stretching from Aden to Malaya, a 'sub-imperial' set of interests also arose that exclusively concerned India, rather than relating to the immediate territorial security of the United Kingdom itself. These related to the administering networks of migrant labour across the British Empire, regulating the terms of commercial exchanges throughout its territory, the modalities and extent to which the subcontinent should be further integrated into the Empire, as well as the defence of the subcontinent's frontiers from rival empires. The Government of India thus served as a vessel to conduct a very dense set of exchanges and interactions with the world, with the objective of promoting its own, as well as British imperial interests. These tasks would continue to remain highly relevant to the successor governments of India and Pakistan, and, in the colonial context, had involved navigating the tricky terrain of European and transatlantic politics during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and producing solutions which would strengthen not just the subcontinent itself, but also the Empire as a whole. It was in this strategic mindset that the early ministry went about identifying India's external interests.

The other crucial function of the colonial government was to serve as an instrument for the promotion of India's interests in the 'protectorate' territories in the buffer zones between the subcontinent and the rest of Asia. Once the British Crown took full responsibility for the governance of the subcontinent from the East India Company, the Indian Political Service was established to liaise between the Government of India and the Princely States. These areas included Baluchistan, the North West Frontier Provinces, Afghanistan, Persia, and Aden. A former civil servant remarked:

> Consider the glacis of north west India where, from Tibet to Afghanistan and on to the Persian Gulf ... India possessed a lookout which kept her interests in view and secured friendly relations with a variety of people ... Yet our relations were removed from mere diplomacy: the Government of India were always subordinate to the British Government, yet their policy was recognised, whether liked or disliked, by generations of neighbours who knew and respected its interpreters. (Coen 1971: 261)

The question of tackling these concerns was influenced by considerations of both financial practicality and the promotion of self-interest. A rough rule of thumb for setting up these positions was that they were posts in proximity to India, and were considered essential to the Government of India; however, they were considered secondary to Whitehall's own immediate external affairs (Vasudevan and Sarkar 2007). The Political Service had in fact handled many critical tasks that required diplomatic efforts. Agents in Yemen, Aden, and other important outposts between the subcontinent and the Middle East were tasked with ensuring that loyalties did not switch to rival powers that could threaten British interests in India (see Brobst 2005). Such concerns could not be supervised from a far-away island half a hemisphere away; they had to be systematically addressed by organizational structures of the government within India. The Annual Reports of the MEA in the years immediately following the transfer of power, testify to the intensification of efforts in regions where the Government of India had long been active. By January 1949 an Afghan trade delegation had arrived in Delhi to conclude a treaty of 'Trade and Friendship', and negotiations were carried out all through that year to establish various intergovernmental contacts with Afghanistan, which included air agreements, direct wireless telegraph agreements, as well as the opening of vice consulates in Jalalabad and Kandahar. The issue of Indian representation in the region, then still known as 'the Persian Gulf', had been streamlined further: 'There are no Indian representatives yet in the Persian Gulf; where large numbers of Indians are employed by the Oil companies ... Meanwhile it has been proposed that the Secretary to the Indian Legation at Baghdad pay periodic visits to Bahrain and Kuwait for keeping in touch with Indian nationals there.'[2] Indeed, a great many of the ministry's early actions with regard to the immediate neighbourhood were to consolidate the linkages established by the Government of India in the interwar period.

The infrastructure, therefore, for conducting a foreign policy was at least partly in place for the Government of India well before the transfer of power. Delegations from India had argued in support of improving the conditions of Indians labourers overseas

at the League of Nations. By 1941 a Department for Indians Overseas came into being. Trade commissioners also represented the Government of India in places where there was a high density of exchange, such as in Hamburg, Alexandria, and Zanzibar. Its representatives were frequently attached as additional members to already existing British missions abroad. The Government of India appointed an Agent General for Washington, and for Chungking in China. It also had a High Commission in London, which was under the control of the Department of Commerce, since its main functions were to look after India's trade interests in the United Kingdom.

In fact, perceptions of what would be beneficial to India's 'strategic interests' had been crucially shaped during the interwar period, and often shared similar contours to the perceptions of the present day. The World Wars had accentuated the demands for a coherent approach to the defence of India's frontiers, and Whitehall as well as the Government of India began to pay closer attention to the means by which this could be achieved. The necessity of integrating strategies of protecting imperial interests in South Asia, the Middle East, and East Africa also gave more prominence to the international role of the Government of India. Soldiers from the Indian army had fought during the First World War on several fronts including East Africa, Egypt, and France (see, for instance, Singha 2013). This manpower had been substantial enough for India to send a large delegation to the signing of the Versailles peace treaty in 1919, and India became the only non-self-governing member at the League of Nations Assembly. Many members of these delegations, including V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, Shanmukham Chetty, as well as Zafarullah Khan, had extensive professional experience in the Government of India, often as members of the Imperial Legislative Council, or in the Viceroy's Council. Although at the time Nehru had crowed, 'Proud Empires are falling before our eyes, huge structures of government are collapsing ... No one knows what will happen in the next six months',[3] the Second World War further accentuated the need for a cohesive Indian position in the region. The political and military events from 1939 to 1945 critically shaped the thinking on how the subcontinent's frontiers should be defended (Kamtekar 2002).

The World Wars also witnessed the fashioning of several administrative tools that the post-colonial states of India and Pakistan would subsequently deploy. One particularly prescient example was the provisions of the Enemy Property legislation in Britain, designed to confiscate German wealth within the country. In the period immediately after independence, a fairly substantial proportion of the Indian Mission in Pakistan had related to claims about Evacuee Property, and how it should be compensated. In India's case, this legislation had to be defended and justified by the MEA to a wide-ranging and often sceptical international audience. Justification for these measures was not simply a manifestation of a new government's desire for reprisal, or even only the product of the 'abnormal' circumstances of the Partition, but also the logical extension of a mode of thinking which had been established due to the demands of a world war. While several very senior officials in the new governments of India and Pakistan were not necessarily supportive of such pieces of legislation, the logic of the institutional fabric in which they

functioned also required that they follow European precedents on the responsibilities of a nation state established in the context of warfare.

One of the earliest activities of Indian missions located across the Commonwealth was to handle applications for Indian citizenship. This task, however, could not be disentangled from the long and complicated history of Indian migrants who had settled, or worked in, other parts of the Commonwealth. An important area in international politics where the Government of India had to take a clear stand was on the question of migrant labour. Many decisions on Commonwealth migration, indentured labour from India, and trade with other countries were thrashed out during this period. A large part of the work of this department concerned the issues relating to Indian settlements elsewhere in the Commonwealth, most prominently in South Africa, Australia, Ceylon, Malaya, and Burma. This issue had animated discussions between Whitehall, Simla, and the dominion governments in South Africa, Kenya, Mauritius, and Malaya from the 1880s, and became a significant theatre for Indian nationalist leaders to voice their opposition to the policies of the colonial government. The welfare, transport, and permanent settlement of migrant labourers became a major preoccupation of the external affairs establishment of the Government of India from the late nineteenth century (see, for instance, Washbrook and Chatterji 2014).

The question of administering, and attempting to regulate—even partially—the human traffic between the subcontinent and other dominions in the Commonwealth, had to be repeatedly visited by the Raj, and systems that were increasingly stricter were evolved as a response to the changing dynamics of migration in the nineteenth century. Paradoxically, membership of the Empire did not necessarily allow unfettered access to residence in its dominions to all its subjects. The Indian Foreign and Colonial Office had been involved in the shaping and implementing of policies on indentured migrants for many years. Indeed, once the slave trade was formally abolished in 1865, the Government of India had also administered the travel of vast numbers of indentured migrants to settlements in Mauritius, Guyana, and East Africa (Tinker 1974). The ensuing scales of migration of labour from India to other parts of the Empire, was one of the Government of India's most critical administrative tasks. For instance, in 1927 following a series of fierce debates around the treatment of indentured labour in South Africa, an agent of the Indian government was also appointed to Durban, to look after migrants' interests. The issue continued to rumble across various departments of the Empire over the following decades and, in 1946, Vikaya Lakshmi Pandit led a delegation to the United Nations over this question.

By March 1917 it had become compulsory for all persons leaving the Indian subcontinent to possess a passport. The regulation of traffic flowing within the British Empire in the form of labourers, indentured migrants, soldiers, pilgrims, and students, became a critical aspect of the governance of India, as well as a component of the policy decisions on just how the region could be further integrated into the economic and political logic of the British Empire. The distribution of passports—a document that validated a person's entry into another country—evolved, but had to be balanced against the necessity of maintaining an easy flow of labour to the plantation colonized. Radhika Singha

has pointed out that 'the passport regime in India crystallised as one which vested great discretionary powers in the executive, both to control movement across borders, and to work in broad exceptions [of who would be allowed to migrate]. In this "nationalisation" of the labour market, some citizens claimed a paternalistic right to regulate the mobility of other politically less qualified citizens' (Singha 2013: 27). Such patterns were only reinforced when the Empire ended, and the post-colonial nation states of India and Pakistan developed institutions which were grounded in interwar political compulsions of the Commonwealth. Indeed, a significant means of establishing authority and legitimacy of the new state was to assert its control over who could rightfully enter its territory.

The difference between being the opposition and the government modifies many political positions, and the foreign policy of the Indian National Congress was no exception to this rule. The debates around continuing membership in the Commonwealth, for instance, indicate such trends particularly clearly. Nehru, along with many other members of his Cabinet had initially opposed the retention of any strong links with the Commonwealth. The Government of India had acquired an influential standing in this forum, and through its interactions on a number of issues, had accumulated professional and procedural expertise in its functioning. Retaining these ties was important for several stakeholders involved in the transfer of power; and while these certainly included the British themselves, a growing body of opinion within the new Indian government also held the same opinion. One important implication for Commonwealth membership was the advantage of some preferential treatment on trade from other member countries. The Government of India had been a signatory of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) with Britain in 1939, and continued to use the terms provided by it after gaining independence. Finally Nehru wrote to the British government in 1948, '[w]e earnestly desire association in the Commonwealth and we feel it is feasible and likely to survive legal and other challenges.'[4]

India's positions on Commonwealth affairs were not, however, by any means unanimous; one member of the Constituent Assembly, Professor K. T. Shah, member from Bombay and a founding member of the United Trade Union Congress declared: 'I for one have never been an admirer of the Commonwealth.' Furthermore, the question of what had to be done for the citizenship rights of overseas Indians provoked a great deal of debate. For example, Shah continued:

> Sir, it is an unfortunate fact that, for whatever reasons, we are still members of the so-called Commonwealth of Nations dominated by Britain our former exploiter. In the Commonwealth of Nations, even though theoretically we are supposed to be equal members, equality is shown more in exclusiveness by some, and maintaining their superiority of the old imperialist days by others, than in the real spirit of true brotherhood that might make that Commonwealth more honest and attractive.[5]

Many of the debates around retention of membership in the Commonwealth drew on a long, and often unpleasant history of the issues involving India's position in the organization. In 1947, however, it was also argued that the association could bring some benefit.

Upon joining the Commonwealth as a republic, Nehru circulated a largely self- congratulatory note to his Cabinet: 'On the whole, I feel convinced that we have every reason to be gratified at the result of this meeting ... Apart from the obvious advantages gained by us, I think India will have the opportunity to progress more rapidly now, industrially and otherwise, and at the same time to play a much more definite role in Asian and World Affairs.'[6]

The question of the terms on which India would continue membership in the Commonwealth after independence was largely one of semantics. Nonetheless, it is important to look at these discussions as a means of gauging the very considerable disagreements and differences that shaped the trajectory of India's foreign relations. A deeper, and more historicized reading of the evolving nature of India's foreign policy allows us to appreciate how its worldview, as well as geopolitical behaviour, was not self-evident at the start, uncritically accepted, and then consistently followed. Indeed, many decisions in this field were quite contingent on events, and based on considerations that fluctuated, varied, or simply disappeared. It was difficult, thus, to have a foreign policy that adhered very strongly to a single principle, or even to a fixed position of self-interest. Furthermore, it could not be centred only on the ideological direction of a single individual. Even if Nehru's vision of India's external relations had been articulated before, as well as after, the transfer of power, it also operated within a grid fashioned by individuals who had lobbied hard to ensure that continuities in the structures of governance would remain. It is instructive, therefore, to examine the extent to which the shaping of a ministry of India's external relations was an exercise in continuity as well as in change.

In 1946 Nehru decided to take on the additional portfolio of the MEA—an area in which many of his colleagues were relatively inexperienced—where he hoped to influence the making of policy more decisively. He had been active in involving the Congress Party with foreign policy during the 1920s and 1930s, and would certainly leave his unmistakable stamp on the ministry in the first two decades. Yet it is misleading to see him as the sole architect of India's foreign policy in this decade, as some historians have suggested. A professionalized ministry, designed specifically for the conduct of external relations, was sought from the start. A functional foreign ministry establishment, and the personnel required for this were rapidly recruited. Most of these men had been active in the Indian Civil Service before independence, and many had worked outside India in the diplomatic establishments of the Government of India including South Africa, Washington, and China.

One particularly important figure in India's international relations at the time was Sir Girija Shankar Bajpai, who was appointed India's Agent General in Washington, partially to placate an American public sympathetic to the nationalist movement in India. Sir Girija, astute and exacting, had joined the Indian Civil Service some decades before independence, and had been Agent General for India in Washington during the Second World War. He remained, moreover, one of the central architects of India's foreign policy, even after the transfer of power, chosen by Nehru to be the Secretary General of the external ministry of affairs in 1947. Along with a number of other senior officials of the

Indian Civil Service, Sir Girija immediately began the task of setting up offices to deal with the foreign relations of independent India.

Although the tenor as well as the substance of Indian foreign policy undoubtedly underwent many transformations under an independent government, the continuities are striking. For example, the report of the External Affairs Committee for the Transfer of Power noted that few changes needed to be made to the existing Commonwealth Relations department, apart from one major exception: 'there will be substantial addition of work to the Commonwealth Relations Wing of the department arising from India's relations with the dominion of Pakistan. The Commonwealth Relations Wing will require one joint secretary, one deputy secretary and one under secretary and one additional Pakistan Section to deal with a large volume of complicated work connected with the dominions of Pakistan.'[7] Furthermore, the nature of the structures also implied that the content of very large amounts of foreign relations would have a close proximity to what the Government of India had previously decided on.

Initially Nehru made attempts to appoint envoys who were not wholly enmeshed in the Civil Service establishment—sending, for instance, his old friend and political colleague from the United Provinces, Sri Prakasa, as High Commissioner to Pakistan. Sir Girija, however, disapproved of this practice and succeeded in the end in getting his way. He insisted from an early date that officials from within the MEA be sent as High Commissioners, and differed from Nehru on how the appointments process could be carried out. What was clearly established within the first few years of the external affairs ministry, however, was the 'professionalization' of its officers—a determination to have a separate set of trained officials specifically for dealing with India's external relations. Its appointments favoured the recruitment of members who had had experience in serving in various professional capacities abroad, whether through their association with the Indian Political Service or the Indian Civil Service (Dutt 1977). India's first High Commissioner to Pakistan, Sri Prakasa, himself a 'political' appointee of Nehru's, rather than a serving member of the Civil Service, complained in his memoirs: 'The Government of India under the leadership of old and experienced ICS officers were not at all sure of the public men who were sent out as high commissioners or as ambassadors by the Prime Minister' (Prakasa 1965: 35). By 1949, 'The problem of finding suitable personnel for staffing India's newly started missions [had] now been solved',[8] and a specially constituted 'Federal Public Service Commission' under Sir Girija Shankar Bajpai had recruited some 89 officers, including Y. D. Gundevia, Badruddin Tyabji, and Jagat Mehta into the Indian Foreign Service. All future appointments were to be made through an examination. This approach to the conduct of foreign relations was not seriously challenged in India; it was widely acknowledged that India's existing external relations apparatus was, in fact, very valuable and would be tapped into even after the transfer of power.

A separate subcommittee of the Partition Council, which was associated with the External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations Office, would handle the division of infrastructure for the Foreign Offices of the two dominions. The subcommittee—named Expert Committee IX—was instructed to make recommendations on relations between

the two dominions as well as with other countries; what the diplomatic representation of the two dominions would be abroad; on the membership of international organizations; and on existing international treaties and engagements. Its members included A. V. Pai, P. Achuta Menon, and Lt. Col. Iskander Mirza. They met daily from 22 June 1947, and in less than a month had submitted their report to the Partition Council on 19 July. The Expert Committee considered the division of assets which belonged to the External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations department of the Government of India, and their holdings abroad, as well as international assets of the Princely States.[9]

The knottiest questions that this committee considered were that of membership of international organizations and the continuation of treaties by the dominions of India and Pakistan. In terms of international standing, India insisted on having the same entitlements that had been accorded prior to Partition, and thus continue to be entitled to the benefits and obligations of its long-standing international engagements. H. M. Patel, who would eventually become Home Sercretary and, later in the 1970s, Union Finance Minister, declared to the Partition Committee in 1947, 'When a country is partitioned, her standing commitments in international relations remain valid.' Mountbatten himself, moreover, had negated the question of extinguishing the erstwhile legal identity of the Government of India. For one thing, he argued that 'the fear was that a country might borrow money much in excess of her needs, then go through a formal partition and claim that neither part of the divided country was responsible for the debts incurred prior to the partition'.[10] Keeping the existing international obligations of the independent Government of India intact, was an important concern to the British. The obligations as well as the debts of the pre-existing Government of India had to continue to be serviced, therefore it was necessary to keep this entity in place.

The MEA thus occupied a curious place in the heart of the post-colonial government. However, the role of the personnel and institutional experiences of its personnel have also to be analysed in greater detail: for it was often at their behest that decisions to retain such structures were made. This is also significant, since it offers us a way of assessing to what extent strategies were not merely dictated by geography or a predetermined strategic interest, but also driven by many significantly placed individuals who had a stake in its survival of already established structures of government. Indeed, for many officers who were trying to secure their professional lives in one or the other dominion, this new reality was accepted with alacrity, and in some cases even enthusiasm. Finally, it is important to locate the precedents in the shaping of India's foreign policy, not just on the abstract plane of 'strategy', but also to understand how a variety of messy, complicated, and often contradictory, historical and domestic factors contributed to its development. Such an analysis will offer not merely a static set of principles that have been consistently followed, but will allow an appreciation of the fact that many principles now defined as 'foundational' were made quite tentatively, and not necessarily due to an overarching ideological framework, and were subject to any number of contingencies and reversals.

Notes

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5. Speech by K. T. Shah on Citizenship Bill, Thursday, 11 August 1949, Constituent Assembly Debates. <http://parliamentofindia.nic.in/ls/debates/vol9p10b.htm>.
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CHAPTER 7

NEHRU'S FOREIGN POLICY

Realism and Idealism Conjoined

ANDREW B. KENNEDY

More than any other individual, Jawaharlal Nehru occupies a singular place in the history of Indian foreign policy. Between the 1920s and his death in 1964, he emerged as a preeminent voice of progressive internationalism and the architect of independent India's foreign policy. As India's first Prime Minister, he was courted by all sides in the Cold War: he was feted in Beijing in 1954, Moscow in 1955, and Washington in 1956. Shortly before this last visit, *The New York Times* raved: 'Jawaharlal Nehru is one of the great figures of our times—and it is a time of giants' ('A Red Carpet for Nehru' 1956). Six years later, Nehru was devastated by India's defeat in the 1962 border conflict with China, and his reputation as a practitioner of foreign policy would never recover. The foundational figure in Indian foreign policy, therefore, Nehru is both a heroic visionary and tragic figure in retrospect.

It is no simple matter to assess such a leader. Indeed, more than half a century after his death, scholars continue to debate the meaning and significance of Nehru's most important initiatives in foreign policy. A basic question remains at the center of this debate: was Nehru a fundamentally idealistic leader or a canny practitioner of realpolitik? Scholars often stress the former, and portray Nehru as an idealistic ideologue whose grand visions often went awry. Some suggest that Nehru's approach lacked any guile whatsoever; it was simply an expression of 'high idealism' (Poulose 1978: 102). Others disparage what they see as Nehru's efforts to save the world from itself through such causes as non-alignment and disarmament, and what they see as his neglect of Indian interests closer to home (Kapur 1988: 703–5). Still others suggest that Nehru's diplomacy was wholly disconnected from any conception of national interest. As one prominent critic has written, 'foreign policy was an end in itself, rather than a means to promote the security and well-being of the citizenry in whose name it was conducted' (Tharoor 2003: 184). In this view, Nehru's idealistic approach to foreign policy was both sincere and misguided.

Another set of scholars interprets Nehru's approach to foreign policy rather differently. In their view, Nehru's idealistic rhetoric was camouflage for an essentially realpolitik approach to world affairs. The specific arguments vary. Some suggest that Nehru took office as an idealist, but that he was compelled by mounting threats to Indian security to adopt a more realist posture (Nayar and Paul 2003: 115–58). Others argue that while Nehru railed against military action by other states, he was quite willing to use force himself when it suited his purposes—with the seizure of Goa the 'most resounding inconsistency between his precepts and his practice' (Maxwell 1974: 636). Still others suggest that Nehru secretly conspired with the superpowers to enhance India's security (Karnad 2002). Lastly, it has been argued that Nehru quietly and deliberately laid the foundation for India's emergence as a nuclear power, even as he called for nuclear disarmament (Karnad 2002). This view, then, insists that Nehru was squarely focused on international competition and Indian security and power.

This chapter challenges both of these perspectives on Nehru's foreign policy. Indeed, it challenges the notion that a sharp distinction between realism and idealism in foreign policy is possible. There are many versions of realism, some of which are more optimistic about international cooperation than others. The term 'idealism', in turn, has never been clearly defined as a school of thought in international relations. While it is sometimes used a pejorative sense and used to dismiss some writers as 'utopian' or 'naïve', it is far from clear what all of the writers who have been tarred with the idealist brush have in common (Ashworth 2006). Indeed, even as E. H. Carr castigated what he called 'idealism' of the interwar period, he also maintained that 'sound political thought must be based on elements of both utopia and reality' (Carr 1962: 93). Following Carr's lead, this essay maintains that realism and idealism are not wholly incompatible and that Nehru's foreign policy was an attempt to reconcile the two. He was idealistic in the sense that he sought to transform international norms and institutions on the basis of moral principles. In doing so, however, Nehru also sought to secure advantages for India and, in that sense, his idealism often had a realist edge.[1] If Nehru's ambitious diplomacy was often unsuccessful, that is hardly evidence that he did not hope to succeed—or that efforts to promote new forms of cooperation are always doomed to fail.

To explore Nehru's attempts to reconcile his moralistic diplomacy with his desire to promote Indian interests, this chapter focuses on three of his most important 'idealistic' preoccupations in foreign policy: the United Nations, non-alignment, and nuclear disarmament. In each case, the analysis makes clear that Nehru was both sincerely committed to what he saw as a moral cause and convinced that advancing it would serve India well.

The United Nations

Nehru was tremendously interested in the UN upon taking office. He recognized, to be sure, that the institution was 'painfully emerging from its infancy' and that it

would need time to develop (Gopal 1984: 2.507). Yet precisely because it was new, Nehru saw the organization as an opportunity to reshape the international order. 'I think the United Nations, as it is, is a very important organization', he declared in late 1947. 'It is an organization which has, at any rate, some element of hope in it of pulling this world out of the morass in which it has sunk' (Gopal 1984: 4.591–2). Over time, in fact, Nehru hoped that the UN would become a sort of world parliament—and the foundation for the dream of 'One World' (Bhagavan 2013). If this long-term vision did not render nation states irrelevant, it did envision a powerful world body that constrained national freedom of action, making military conflict and imperial domination impossible. Nehru was keenly aware of the League of Nations' dismal record in this regard; he hoped that the UN would succeed where the League had failed.

Nehru did not support the UN simply to make the world a better place, however. He also believed that a stronger UN would serve important Indian interests. First, as an assembly of the world's independent nations, the UN highlighted the hard-won sovereignty that India would win in 1950, when the country ceased to be a British dominion. In light of the UN Charter's commitment to self-determination, Nehru believed the organization could facilitate further decolonization. In his view, India had every reason to encourage this trend. 'India should help in this process', Nehru wrote while serving in the interim government, 'both because it is the correct approach and also in the narrow interests of India herself' (Gopal 1984: 1.446). Nehru continued to emphasize this theme as Prime Minister.

In fact, Nehru saw the UN as a means to suppress efforts to restore colonial rule in the wake of the Second World War. After the Netherlands launched a military offensive in Indonesia in July of 1947, Nehru wrote to the Security Council charging that the situation represented 'a threat to international peace and security' under Article 34 of the UN Charter (Gopal 1984: 3.378). On August 1, the Council passed a resolution calling for both sides to cease hostilities. After a renewed Dutch offensive in December of 1948, Nehru denounced the action and convened a conference of 19 Asian nations in New Delhi. Exhorting the Security Council to halt the Dutch offensive, Nehru led the participants in demanding independence for Indonesia by January 1, 1950, a goal that was ultimately met.

More broadly, Nehru saw the UN as a 'force for peace' in the world (Gopal 1984: 1.477). This was intimately related to India's interests. Before taking power, Nehru had argued that the world's newly independent countries would need peace in order to develop and would wish to avoid war given their weakness. 'Their weight will always be thrown on the side of world peace', he had argued, 'for any war would be disastrous to them' (Gopal 1972: 15.513). After joining the interim government, he continued to stress India's need for a pacific environment. This was not only because war was abhorrent, but also because India 'needs all her resources for intended development' (Gopal 1984: 1.469). As Prime Minister, he continued to stress the need for development and noted the stakes for India in the event of another world war:

> Looking at the world today, I can say there is no immediate likelihood of war. But the situation is very tense and all the nations are busily preparing for another war instead of learning a lesson from the previous war and trying to follow the path of peace. If, unfortunately, war breaks out, it is bound to affect India. (Gopal 1984: 6.35)

By 1949, Nehru specified that '[w]e want at least fifteen years of peace in order to be able to develop our resources' (Government of India 1961: 48). In short, Nehru was not only eager to avoid another global conflict for its own sake, but also because India needed time to develop and grow.

Nehru thus saw the UN as an opportunity to reshape the international system in ways that were both morally desirable and consistent with India's interests in particular. By safeguarding India's sovereignty and promoting international peace, it offered a foundation on which India could establish itself and commence its rise to greatness.

Closer to home, of course, the UN Security Council would become a source of immense frustration for Nehru after conflict broke out in Kashmir in 1947. A princely state under the Raj, Kashmir was governed by the Hindu Maharaja Hari Singh. The majority of its diverse population was Muslim, however, and it had yet to accede to either Pakistan or India at the time of independence. In October, Pakistan infiltrated armed 'raiders' into the state to challenge the Maharaja, though Pakistani officials denied responsibility for the influx (Khan 1970: 3–26). In response, the Indian government airlifted forces to Srinagar. India also accepted Kashmir's accession, with the understanding that the will of the people on this question would be ascertained once peace had been restored. In December, after much deliberation, Nehru ultimately decided to make an appeal to the UN Security Council, asking it to prevent Pakistan from assisting in the invasion of Kashmir (Grover and Arora 1998: 3.211–15).

Nehru made the appeal convinced that the Security Council would support India. In fact, he told his close friend and then Governor General Lord Louis Mountbatten that he expected the Security Council to come to a quick decision (Gopal 1984: 4.421). In early January 1948, the Prime Minister was confident enough to express hope for 'prompt action' while answering questions at a press conference (Gopal 1984: 5.171). The Security Council's course of action, however, proved a terrific disappointment for Nehru. Rather than calling Pakistan to account, the Council passed a more ambiguous resolution that called on both parties to exercise restraint. Nehru made his feelings about the Council's course of action abundantly clear. As he wrote to V. K. Krishna Menon, then India's High Commissioner in London, in February 1948:

> The Security Council business has depressed and distressed me greatly. I could never have imagined that this Council could possibly behave so irresponsibly as it has done. (Gopal 1984: 5.219)

Nehru persevered with the UN process, however, engaging with the UN Commission for India and Pakistan over the course of 1948 and ultimately accepting its proposal for

ending the conflict. Yet Nehru would never again invite the Security Council to referee the dispute over Kashmir.

Despite Nehru's frustration with the Security Council, he continued to see the UN as a vital global institution after the war. In the 1950s, it became a platform upon which he campaigned for nuclear disarmament (discussed later in this chapter). In the early 1960s, Nehru dispatched Indian troops to support the UN effort to bring peace to the newly independent Congo. Throughout, Nehru continued to see the UN as a vital forum in which the world's most powerful states could attempt to resolve their differences peacefully. For that reason, Nehru persisted in lobbying for the inclusion of communist China in the UN. In 1955, in fact, Nehru suggested that the question of China's representation was more pressing than revising the UN Charter to create a sixth permanent seat for India, a reform that the Soviets had proposed.[2] Nehru's deeper concern may have been that revising the Charter would become a highly acrimonious process in the context of Cold War rivalry, risking a collapse of the UN itself.[3] Whatever his precise concerns, it is clear that Nehru remained deeply interested in the UN well after the war in Kashmir.

To sum up, Nehru believed that the UN had a key role to play in establishing a peaceful and more cooperative world order. Yet he also believed that a strong and effective UN would also serve Indian interests well. The UN was not only a means of facilitating—and preserving—decolonization but also a mechanism that could promote a peaceful environment in which India could develop. Nehru was intensely disappointed by the UN Security Council's failure to support India during the First Kashmir War, to be sure. His broader belief that the UN could serve as the foundation of a new and more progressive world order survived this setback, however, and continued to shape his foreign policy thereafter.

Non-Alignment

Nehru's crusade against the Cold War alliance system began even before he became Prime Minister. In September 1946, as Minister for External Affairs in the interim government, he famously stated that 'we propose, as far as possible, to keep away from the power politics of groups, aligned against one another' (Gopal 1984: 1.405). There was no little idealism behind this stance. As Nehru observed, rivalry between opposing blocs had 'led in the past two world wars' and that it 'may again lead to disasters on an even vaster scale'. Or as Nehru would later put it, 'the very process of marshaling the world into two hostile camps precipitates the conflict which it has sought to avoid' (Gopal 1984: 13.317). This moralistic concern for world peace, in turn, was not simply contrived for public purposes. As he wrote to his sister, Vijayalakshmi Pandit, in November of that year, '[w]e have to steer a middle course not merely because of expediency but also because we consider it the right course' (Gopal 1984: 1.539).

If Nehru was genuinely concerned about the world in general, he also believed that non-alignment would serve narrower Indian interests. First, he was clearly worried that overt alignment with one superpower would undermine India's hard-won

independence. He was not above staying within the British Commonwealth, of course, which Nehru suggested brought 'a touch of healing' to India's relationship with Britain (Gopal 1975: 2.54). Nor was he above relying on other countries for military technology, at least in the near-term.[4] By adopting a non-aligned stance, however, India could diversify its international relationships and thus its dependence on any single power or bloc. His note to his sister in 1946 underlined this point: 'there is always the danger of becoming ourselves satellites of the Anglo-American group' (Gopal 1984: 1.539). In this context, it must be noted that India under Nehru acquired licenses to manufacture military equipment not only from the United Kingdom and the United States but also from Sweden, France, Germany, Japan, and the Soviet Union, among other countries (Subrahmanyam 1976: 115).

Non-alignment also helped India to diversify its economic relationships. Nehru was determined that India would become an industrial power in its own right, but in the short term he was resigned to importing or licensing foreign technology when necessary. If Nehru saw the West as an important economic partner in this regard, he had no desire for India to remain dependent on it. Nehru's socialist mindset, too, prompted him to take an interest in other economic partners. India signed its first trade agreement with the Soviet Union in 1953, and two years later the two countries reached an agreement to set up a steel plant at Bhilai (K. B. Lall 1976: 192). India also developed trade relationships with Eastern European countries. Such diversification only went so far, however: India's trade with the West easily outstripped that with the socialist bloc throughout Nehru's time (Bhat 2011: 81–2).

Third, Nehru worried that alignment would lead to entrapment in conflicts from which India ought to remain aloof. Nehru was cognizant of the fact that India, as a colonial appendage of the United Kingdom, had inevitably been dragged into the Second World War. 'If again war breaks out … we shall keep out of it and try to keep as many other countries as possible out of it also', the Prime Minister explained to the chief ministers of the Indian states in January 1953. 'That is the reason why we have refused to align ourselves with either of the two great power blocs' (Parthasarathi 1988: 3.236).

Lastly, Nehru saw non-alignment as a means of maximizing Indian influence. 'If we line up with either of the major contestants for world supremacy', he wrote in 1952, 'we give up such little influence that might possess in averting catastrophe' (Parthasarathi 1988: 3.87). At other times, Nehru was less modest about how much influence India could exert from its non-aligned position. In late 1948, Nehru declared that India had become the fourth or fifth most important country in the UN, after the United States, the USSR, the United Kingdom, and perhaps France (Gopal 1984: 8.298). In the mid-1950s, Nehru would suggest that non-aligned India deserved much credit for arranging an armistice in Korea in 1953 and for the Geneva Conference in 1954. The latter, he suggested, had possibly averted 'a world war' (Gopal 1984: 26.309).

For all of these reasons, Nehru was convinced that non-alignment was the right course for India. It made sense, as he put it, 'whether we look at this question from the point of view of narrow national interest or the larger one of world peace' (Parthasarathi 1988: 3.87). Yet he also anticipated from the very beginning that a non-aligned stance

would be difficult to maintain. 'Both America and Russia are extraordinarily suspicious of each other as well as of other countries', he wrote in early 1947. 'This makes our path difficult and we may well be suspected by each of leaning towards the other' (Gopal 1984: 1.576). As it turned out, non-alignment may have created a context in which India was able to improve relations with the Soviet Union in the 1950s. At the same time, however, it put a chill in New Delhi's relations with Washington (Kux 1992: 128–31).

Ultimately, Nehru's non-aligned posture would be largely discarded following India's war with China in 1962. Sino-Indian relations had become acrimonious in the late 1950s, as the two governments disputed the proper location of their shared border. In the fall of 1962, the border dispute reached its climax. On October 20, in the wake of more limited clashes, China launched major offensives against India's border defenses, which then proceeded to collapse. On November 19, 1962, Nehru wrote to US President John F. Kennedy and explained that India was in dire need of external assistance. 'We have to have more comprehensive assistance', the Prime Minister wrote, 'if the Chinese are to be prevented from taking over the whole of Eastern India' (Nehru 1962). The Kennedy administration was in the process of drafting a favorable reply to this request when China unilaterally declared a ceasefire on November 21. After the war, in July 1963, Nehru signed an air defense agreement with the United States, which provided for joint training exercises among US, British, and Indian forces within India. The agreement also noted that the United States would 'consult' with India in the event of a Chinese attack (US Embassy India 2000: 19.307). Nehru also allowed the United States to use bases in India to conduct U2 spy missions against China after the war (Pedlow and Welzenbach 1992: 231–3). Having carefully kept his distance from the United States for years, Nehru was now compelled to embrace it.

It is easy to see this move as an instance in which Nehru abandoned idealism for realism. This conclusion would not do justice to the premises on which non-alignment was based, however. As the preceding paragraphs have emphasized, it was not a stance to be adopted without regard for India's own interests, as Nehru understood them. India's defeat in 1962 forced Nehru to consider India's interests in a new light and, more specifically, to choose between two evils: subjugation by China or closer military ties to the United States. In choosing the latter, Nehru strove to retain at least a veneer of non-alignment. Indeed, Nehru was careful not to ally with the United States more formally following the war with China, notwithstanding suggestions that India do so. This caution reflected not only his long-standing aversion to military pacts in general, but also his concern that a more formal pact would alienate the Soviet Union, whose support against China he continued to seek (Raghavan 2010: 309). In a limited sense, then, Nehru's pursuit of non-alignment survived the war with China and continued until his death.

Disarmament

Nehru's passion for nuclear disarmament was remarkable. As Kanti Bajpai has written, 'Nehru's approach (to disarmament), looked at from where we are now, appears

more sophisticated, more original, more flexible, more practical, and more ambitious at the same time than anything that India or most countries in the world are prepared to essay' (Bajpai 2003: 354). While making the case against nuclear weaponry, India's Prime Minister often sounded like an idealist who was both anxious about the threat of nuclear war and optimistic about the possibility of international cooperation. In April 1954, for example, following the detonation of a 15-megaton hydrogen bomb by the United States at Bikini Atoll, Nehru charged that the weapon 'threaten(ed) the existence of man and civilization as we know it' and called for a 'standstill agreement' on nuclear tests (Singh and Sharma 2000: 1.23–7). In 1960, while addressing the UN, he was even more apocalyptic, arguing that 'if within the next three or four years, effective disarmament is not agreed to and implemented, then all the goodness in the world will not be able to stop the drift to certain disaster' (Government of India 1961: 219). Nehru's interest in reining in the nuclear arms race was not simply a public performance; it was also evident in his private correspondence (Kennedy 2012: 209).[5]

Indeed, Nehru did more than pay lip service to the cause of nuclear disarmament. Domestically, he made sure that India retained its credibility as an advocate of disarmament by insisting that the nuclear program remain peaceful, notwithstanding suggestions to the contrary. 'How can we', the Prime Minister asked Parliament, 'without showing the utter insincerity of what we have always said, go in for doing the very thing that which we have repeatedly asked the other powers not to do?' (Gupta 1976: 250). Internationally, he strove to advance measures that would slow—and ultimately halt—the nuclear arms race. His call for a 'standstill agreement' in 1954 made him the first world leader to call for a moratorium on nuclear testing. In the early 1960s, when efforts toward a test ban treaty picked up steam, Nehru strove to ensure that the talks were as successful as possible. In fact, after the United States and the United Kingdom proposed a partial test ban in September of 1961, India continued to press for a treaty that would forbid tests of any kind (A. S. Lall 1964: 20–1). In the end, of course, India supported the Partial Test Ban Treaty (PTBT) with great enthusiasm.

If Nehru's disarmament diplomacy reflected some degree of idealism, it also reflected his perception of narrower Indian interests. First, Nehru was not willing to sign on to any sort of disarmament arrangement, regardless of the implications for India. In 1954, US President Dwight Eisenhower proposed international control of fissile materials under the UN. In response, Nehru rejected the idea of giving such 'vast power' to a body that would have 'the great powers sitting in it and lording it over' (Singh and Sharma 2000: 29). He later referred to this danger as 'atomic colonialism' (Singh and Sharma 2000: 104).

Second, it was Nehru's belief that disarmament was very much in the interests of relatively weak powers like India. Before taking office, Nehru had anticipated that India would be a weak power after it became independent, and that progress toward disarmament would therefore be very much in its interests. 'India cannot at present imaginably become a military power of first class importance', he wrote in a confidential memo in August 1940. 'It can at best become a third rate power and that too at a cost which is almost unbearable for a poor country. It is therefore essential for India that world disarmament should take place' (Gopal 1972: 11.126).

Lastly, Nehru hoped that the disarmament process would come to constrain India's rivals, particularly China. Indian diplomats worried as early as 1960 that China might conduct a nuclear test sometime in the next few years (Kennedy 2011: 125). Over the next few years, Nehru clearly worried that a Chinese test was imminent (Kennedy 2012: 205–6). It was against this backdrop that Nehru celebrated the conclusion of the PTBT. While China rejected the treaty, Nehru clearly hoped that the process it set in motion would ultimately constrain India's rival. Addressing Parliament in 1961, he was diplomatic enough not to say 'China' even as he referred to the need to head off the nuclear programs of emerging nuclear powers:

> It is obvious that in the course of a few years, maybe two, three or four years more, many more countries are likely to have (nuclear weapons) and if there is no check on their production and manufacture now, then it will become impossible at a later stage to put any check on them, when many countries have them ... Therefore, it is of utmost importance that (the established nuclear powers) should try to arrive at a settlement in regard to these nuclear tests and, of course, in regard to general disarmament. (Singh and Sharma 2000: 368–9)

In the wake of Nehru's death, Indian diplomats continued to look for opportunities to constrain the Chinese nuclear program, and this agenda was evident as India joined disarmament talks that would eventually lead to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (Kennedy 2011: 126–8).

In short, if Nehru believed that disarmament would be good for the world, he also clearly believed that it should and would serve narrower Indian interests as well. In retrospect, Nehru's fervent enthusiasm for nuclear disarmament might seem naïve. The PTBT was not a stepping stone to disarmament, or even a more comprehensive ban. Yet Nehru was arguably more successful in pursuing a broader goal of his—delegitimizing nuclear weapons as instruments of statecraft. As he once put it, 'the general understanding of humanity should morally condemn the making and possession of nuclear weapons so greatly that no one would dare use them' (Government of India 1961: 197). India's first Prime Minister would undoubtedly take pride in the fact that they have not been used in the decades that have passed since those words were spoken.

Conclusion

Nehru's diplomacy cannot simply be labeled 'idealist' or 'realist'. Instead, it is my contention that efforts to transform international norms and institutions can—at least in some cases—reflect both lofty moral principles and narrow national interests. Nehru's diplomatic initiatives reviewed here offer several cases in point. Nehru promoted the United Nations not simply because he believed it was a 'force for peace' but also because he understood that India in particular needed a peaceful environment in which to develop

and grow. When Nehru approached the Security Council during the First Kashmir War, he was fully convinced that India's cause would prevail. He championed non-alignment not only to save the world from 'disaster', but also to bolster Indian autonomy, avoid entrapment in great power conflicts, and maximize India's influence. Nehru campaigned for disarmament not only because he worried about a nuclear cataclysm, but also because he worried about India's ability to compete in a nuclear arms race and, in later years, with particular concern about China's emerging capabilities.

Viewed in this light, Nehru's diplomacy might seem unremarkable. He is certainly not the only leader who has sought to combine moral aims and national interests in the making of foreign policy. Nehru was extraordinary, however, for the boldness with which he attempted to reshape the international system. He did not simply call for other countries to respect the United Nations; he willingly involved it in India's first war with Pakistan. He did not simply call for non-alignment while deepening military ties with one bloc or the other; his high-profile campaign against alliances complicated India's relations with Washington for years before the war with China pushed him into a closer relationship with the United States. He did not simply pay lip service to disarmament; he deliberately constrained India's nuclear program to promote this end. As I have argued elsewhere, Nehru's remarkably bold diplomacy reflected his belief that his country had a unique capacity to promote international cooperation, and that such sacrifices were therefore worth making (Kennedy 2012: 139–237). Nehru's successors have often seemed inspired by his diplomacy, and the themes he evoked as Prime Minister became integral in the discourse of Indian foreign policy. Yet none of Nehru's successors have truly shared his confidence in India's diplomatic prowess. As a result, none of them have acted with as much ambition or achieved as much global renown as he did—and none of them have suffered such painful setbacks.

Notes

1. I am drawing here on the idea that an essential aspect of realism is the preoccupation of states with competition and relative power, rather than their welfare in an absolute sense.
2. Nehru also noted that 'some people' in the United States had suggested that India replace China in the Security Council. He suspected that this was designed 'to create trouble between us and China' and thus dismissed it (Gopal 1984: 29.231).
3. See Manu Bhagavan, 'India and the United Nations—Or Things Fall Apart', in this volume.
4. In fact, British officers continued to serve as the chiefs of India's airforce and navy well into the 1950s.
5. See also Rajesh Rajagopalan, 'Multilaterism in India's Nuclear Policy: A Questionable Default Option' in this volume on Nehru's interest in the cause.

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CHAPTER 8

INDIRA GANDHI'S FOREIGN POLICY

Hard Realism?

SURJIT MANSINGH

INDIRA Gandhi once described her father, Jawaharlal Nehru, as a 'saint who strayed into politics' and herself as 'a tough politician'.[1] This remark has been quoted frequently and Indira Gandhi described as a practitioner of realpolitik: expedient, unprincipled, and ruthless in her pursuit of power. Similarly, many see India's foreign policy under Mrs Gandhi's overall guidance embodying realistic, rather than Nehru's idealistic, or liberal and normative, approaches to foreign affairs.[2] Suggesting Indira Gandhi's unlikely schooling in theoretical concepts, this chapter enumerates the dominant features of the international and domestic setting within which Indira Gandhi acted when in power (1966–77 and 1980–4), before attempting to assess her record in terms of 'hard realism'.

Realists claim an intellectual lineage going back to Thucydides's *History of the Peloponnesian War* and Kautilya's *Arthashastra* (fifth and fourth centuries BCE) as well as Machiavelli's *The Prince* (sixteenth century CE), all of which describe how rulers of states can and should aggrandize their capability, justify all actions by reasons of state, and calculate interstate relations on power differentials. Classical realists of the twentieth century include E. H. Carr, Hans Morgenthau, and 'structuralist realist' Kenneth Waltz.[3] All take the state as the unit of analysis, define national interest in terms of increasing power, and postulate 'rational choice' by decision-makers mainly on the basis of a state's place in an anarchic international structure. Hard realist John Mearsheimer (2003) characterizes international relations as a recurring struggle for wealth and power, leading to security dilemmas and possible wars, with ultimate safety depending on becoming the most powerful state, or hegemon, in a regional or global arena. Robert Gilpin and A. F. K. Organski further bolster the 'hegemonic stability theory' in favour of one preponderant power, such as the United States, shaping the international system. Realist literature focuses on the behaviour of great powers, with lesser powers presumed to have few choices. It makes little theoretical recognition of

Nehru's posture of non-alignment as a source of Indian influence verging on power in the 1950s.

This chapter analyses Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's foreign policy from a realist perspective of power relations at a time when the rigid bipolar international environment of the early Cold War was changing. We consider her politics in terms of increasing or diminishing India's power relative to others.

When Indira Gandhi became Prime Minister in 1966 the world was still bipolar. The Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962,[4] when the two superpowers had so narrowly avoided falling over the nuclear precipice, influenced their subsequent behaviour. Washington and Moscow created a 'hot line' to enable instant communication between their respective chief decision-makers. They tried to reduce the risks of nuclear conflagration by banning atmospheric tests in 1963, negotiating arms control (not disarmament) agreements, and together drafting a nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT) in 1968 to prevent other countries from producing nuclear weapons, though Britain, France, and China had already done so. Further, the Soviet Union and United States appeared to reach tacit understanding to prevent any regional conflict between their actual or putative clients from spiralling out of control. Thus, the United Nations Security Council moved quickly to impose a ceasefire on the India–Pakistan war of September 1965 following Pakistan's abortive military adventure named Operation Gibraltar in Kashmir. Nor was India permitted to reap benefits from its military victory because mediation by Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin at a meeting in Tashkent between India's Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri and Pakistan's military President Ayub Khan in January 1966 restored the territorial status quo ante bellum. Further, both the United States and the Soviet Union soon demonstrated their respective intentions to assist Pakistan achieve military parity with India through arms transfers. India's ambassador B. K. Nehru in Washington could do no more than express his dismay (Nehru 1997: 429). New Delhi's response to Moscow came later in the form of Mrs Gandhi's silence when Soviet and Chinese forces clashed along their border in March 1969, quickly evoking Kosygin's public pledge of support for India.

In short, when Indira Gandhi took charge India faced an intimidating external environment and occupied a relatively low position in the international hierarchy of states. Mrs Gandhi faced an even more unfavourable environment at home in 1966–7. The Congress Party was faction ridden and rapidly losing popular support, as amply demonstrated in the parliamentary and state legislature elections of 1967. Three years of drought and near-famine conditions in much of the country rendered India totally dependent on food grain imports from the United States on concessional rupee payments. Her predecessor, Lal Bahadur Shastri, had already negotiated financial assistance from the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the United States. He had also agreed to initiate some reforms in India's unproductive agricultural sector and to devalue the rupee—a step taken by Mrs Gandhi in 1966 resulting in public outrage. Nor did she enjoy the support of Congress Party leaders who had elected her as Prime Minister on the assumption that she was weak and malleable. Her deep-seated feelings of insecurity and isolation were not assuaged.

The way Mrs Gandhi tackled these initial challenges to her own authority and India's strategic autonomy justifies the label of 'realist', as one willing to face facts pragmatically, without sentimentality or ideology, and focus on power relationships. At home she used the occasion of electing a new President after the death of Dr Zakir Hussain in 1969 to split the party by backing V. V. Giri against the establishment nominee Sanjeeva Reddy. She won. She adopted 'leftist' economic policies beginning with nationalization of banks that were initially popular and enhanced the power of government. Thereafter, as is well known, she gradually concentrated power over the Congress Working Committee and all institutions of governance in her own hands. A stunning electoral victory in 1971 on the populist platform of 'garibi hatao' (abolish poverty) seemed to legitimize her efforts and re-establish the Congress Party's dominance in India.

In foreign affairs, Indira Gandhi sensibly made her first state visit as Prime Minister of an economically strapped country to Washington in March 1966. She evoked extraordinary gallantry from President Lyndon Johnson who then took an unprecedented personal interest in the progress of the Indian monsoon, the transfer of new agricultural technology and hybrid seeds for India's Green Revolution, and in the shipment of food grain to India in what came to be known as a 'ship to mouth' operation. Mrs Gandhi denied making a 'deal' to modify Indian policies and always resented the reminders of dependence emanating from Washington. Though her criticism of US policies in Vietnam were no sharper than those made by some European leaders, Johnson was enraged by the joint communiqué she signed in Moscow in July 1966 mentioning 'imperialists in Southeast Asia' and distancing India from them. However, he did not suspend food grain shipments and in 1967 announced a new arms policy suspending military supplies to *both* Pakistan and India. New Delhi was pleased.

Moscow too had underestimated Indira Gandhi. She was too cautious to join the public outcry against the Soviet Union in 1968 when Kosygin visited Pakistan and promised military and economic assistance. However, she remained conspicuously silent when Soviet and Chinese forces clashed along their border on the Ussuri River in March 1969. Within two months Kosygin publicly pledged Soviet support for India in case of any external attack and offered a comprehensive security agreement. This was partially accepted as a strictly bilateral arrangement in 1971 under rather different circumstances. Mrs Gandhi liked to demonstrate her control of foreign policy decisions and India's autonomy in a fluid external environment.

The international configuration changed dramatically in 1971 when the United States and the People's Republic of China (PRC) concluded their two-year minuets of secret negotiations in Warsaw. US National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger secretly flew to Beijing, and in July US President Richard Nixon announced his intention to personally visit China to 'seek the normalization of relations' with it. In October the United Nations expelled the Chinese Nationalist government in Taiwan and admitted the PRC to China's seat in all UN bodies including the Security Council, with veto powers. Nixon's much-publicized visit to China[5] resulted in the Shanghai Declaration of February 1972, an exchange of liaison officers (formal diplomatic relations were established only in

1979), the revival of trade, and eventually US withdrawal of its forces from Taiwan and Vietnam.

The most important facet of this narrative for the Indian subcontinent was that the Nixon–Kissinger team used Pakistan's military ruler Yahya Khan as their conduit to China and felt indebted to him. They lifted the arms embargo on Pakistan and supported rather than criticized the actions of the Pakistan army in the eastern wing of that country amounting to genocide, ignoring the critical reports of US officials stationed there.[6] The military crackdown in East Pakistan involving large-scale massacres and rapes also resulted in the forced expulsion of its citizens to India numbering about 10 million by the end of the year and a full-scale civil war. This situation created a multi-layered crisis for India. Indira Gandhi was forced to formulate policies to deal with it in consultation with a team of advisers loyal to her and offering different perspectives. Her decisions were cautious and incremental rather than indicative of some grand strategy to dismember Pakistan as incorrectly imagined in Washington. She did not rule out military action if proven necessary, but relied on the good judgement of Chief of Army Staff General Manekshaw on tactics and timing, and hoped for a political solution to the crisis. Finding the United States and China firmly backing an increasingly bellicose Pakistan, Mrs Gandhi's government signed a Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation with the Soviet Union on 9 August 1971 to guarantee military supplies and pre-empt a possible Chinese attack on India. Mrs Gandhi's speeches to the public and in Parliament were restrained and matter-of-fact, not designed to excite violent emotional reactions in a populace already outraged by refugee accounts of Pakistan's brutality.

India did not formally recognize an independent Bangladesh until 6 December but had allowed a 'provisional government of exile' set up by the Awami League to function from Calcutta. India looked after refugees at enormous cost, prevented any outbreak of epidemics among them or their melting into the surrounding Indian population, and permitted the Awami League to recruit a guerrilla liberation force named Mukti Bahini that worked with India's paramilitary Border Security Force and which was supplied and assisted by the Indian army. Meanwhile, the Prime Minister launched an unprecedented public relations as well as diplomatic campaign to educate international opinion on the humanitarian issues at stake in the military repression of East Pakistan. Mrs Gandhi herself undertook two international tours for the purpose of awakening the conscience of the world. She elicited public sympathy in Europe. Meeting an antagonistic Nixon in the United States she appealed over his head to the American public and the US Congress soon financed some refugee assistance. However, and for various reasons, no government was prepared to take any action to censure Pakistan and left the burden of the Bangladesh crisis for India to carry alone.

Tensions with Pakistan rose in October–November as Pakistan moved troops in the west to the Indian border, attacked Mukti Bahini bases and some Indian villages with artillery, and bombed Indian airfields in Punjab on 3 December. War was declared the next day. India launched a rapid three-pronged military advance in East Bengal that culminated with victorious entry into Dhaka and Indian commanders accepting the complete surrender of over 90,000 Pakistan armed forces in Bangladesh.

The same evening Mrs Gandhi issued a unilateral ceasefire on all fronts. Meanwhile, the UN Security Council's attempt to impose an earlier ceasefire had been frustrated by a Soviet veto and discussions moved to the General Assembly. India's representatives at the UN explained and justified India's actions on several grounds, including the humanitarian 'rescue' of a population being violently oppressed by its own government.[7] Other countries did not accept this for various reasons of their own, probably including the fear of creating a precedent that could be used against post-colonial states with weak national identities. It must be remembered that the 'Responsibility to Protect' doctrine for humanitarian intervention endorsed by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan did not emerge until 2005, after the Cold War had ended and 'ethnic cleansing' in Rwanda and Bosnia had evoked emotional international responses. In 1971 Indira Gandhi stressed national security reasons for military action, claiming self-defence from Pakistan's 'refugee aggression' that was creating enormous social and economic tensions in India. Mrs Gandhi's main focus throughout the crisis was on the refugees; they were repatriated to Bangladesh soon after the war ended. Military victory assured the independence of Bangladesh and its acceptance by other states as such, some sooner and some later. Mrs Gandhi and her top advisers consistently denied any intention of attacking West Pakistan or even evicting Pakistan forces from Jammu and Kashmir. They were certainly aware that the US carrier fleet *Enterprise* in the Bay of Bengal and nervous Soviet interlocutors would counter any such action, should it be attempted. New Delhi chose to ignore the superpowers for the most part, though the United States was asked to close its Agency of International Development offices in India and highly restrictive visa practices were applied to Americans wishing to study or work in India. India could and did claim the moral high ground in dealing with the Bangladesh crisis and emerged from 1971 with enhanced power and prestige.

India now was recognized as the dominant state in South Asia with which both superpowers cultivated relations.[8] In 1973 the United States effectively wrote off India's huge debt accruing from food grain imports and so removed one source of distrust.[9] Acting on the realist principle of seeking security through hegemony, Mrs Gandhi proceeded to consolidate India's superior status in the region to the end of her first term of office. She speedily withdrew forces from Bangladesh, signed a long-term treaty of peace and friendship with its friendly government led by Mujibur Rahman, and extended generous economic assistance to it. However, the bloody military coup of 1975 in Dhaka set back the relationship for decades. On 2 July 1972, Mrs Gandhi signed an agreement with Pakistan's Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto at Simla. This document deliberately avoided imposing harsh and punitive provisions on Pakistan, drawing a lesson from the disastrous consequences of demands made by the Western Allies on a defeated Germany after the First World War. The Simla Agreement did include India's key demands of bilateral and peaceful settlement of all differences with Pakistan excluding foreign mediation, and respect for a rationalized Line of Control (LOC) in Jammu and Kashmir. Bhutto verbally promised conversion of the LOC to an international border but was overthrown before he could do so, presuming his sincerity.[10] Indira Gandhi has been much criticized in India for failing to have this promise written into the Simla Agreement as

legally binding, as well as for returning territory and prisoners of war to Pakistan without comparative recompense.[11] Probably, she realized that it was unrealistic to expect Bhutto's signature on a provision freezing the status quo in Kashmir while aiming for the top position in Pakistan. But she failed to anticipate that he and subsequent leaders of Pakistan would interpret India's generosity as weakness and devote all their efforts to undermining India by any and every means. A Pakistan caught between mosque and military seemed unable to accept reality and seek peace with its larger neighbour. The military ruler Zia ul Haq who replaced Bhutto deepened the Islamic ideology of the state with entrenched enmity toward India (Haqqani 2005).

Elsewhere in the region Mrs Gandhi assisted Sri Lanka's Prime Minister Shrimavo Bandarnaike put down a leftist insurrection of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna in 1971 through the Indian navy and cooperated with her to declare the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace free of superpower naval deployments. India's navy was active, if small, and India the most powerful littoral state on the Indian Ocean rim. Further, in the early 1980s Mrs Gandhi appointed veteran diplomat G. P. Parthasarathy to mediate an agreement between the Sri Lankan government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam seeking secession of the Tamil north, but without committing India to enforcement.[12] Realist as she was, she tolerated the training and arming of Tamil rebels in India's southern state of Tamil Nadu. It is unlikely that she would have committed Indian forces to a futile conflict on the island nation as was undertaken in 1987.

On India's northern perimeter, the Himalayan kingdom of Nepal is strategically vital to India and the two had enjoyed a very special relationship of closeness since 1950. But in the 1970s King Mahendra and his successor King Birendra found economic and security dependence on India irksome and were also subjected to increasing pressure (and enticement) from China to the north. Public statements and newspaper articles published in Nepal and proposals to declare a Himalayan 'zone of peace' became irritants; New Delhi was not as tolerant as it might have been. For example, when Nepal sought amendment in 1975 to the Trade and Transit Treaties that were its life-line as a landlocked country, India exerted pressure on the palace and insisted on getting its way on all points of difference. Already, in the adjacent Himalayan kingdom of Sikkim, Mrs Gandhi had lost patience with the international attention paid to the newly assertive princely ruler (Chogyal) and his American wife. Sikkim was a protectorate of India then experiencing some ethnic tensions expressed in a fractious legislature with an anti-Chogyal majority fomented by India. By actions of the Sikkim legislature and the Indian Parliament, Sikkim was annexed in 1974–5 and made the 22nd state of the Indian Union in a clumsy two-stage operation (Datta-Ray 1984). Surprisingly perhaps, and due to great sensitivity and skilful diplomacy on both sides, the third Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan seemed unaffected by that annexation and valued its special relationship of 'beneficial bilateralism' with India. India too continued to support Bhutan's modest ambitions with economic assistance and sponsored its entry to the United Nations.

Hegemony in South Asia seemed assured for India and Mrs Gandhi is credited with a so-called 'Indira Doctrine'. In emulation of the 'Monroe Doctrine' propounded by the United States in the nineteenth century as applicable to the Western hemisphere, the

'Indira Doctrine' opposed the presence of external powers in the Indian Ocean or in South Asia, terming it as inimical to Indian national interests unless it acknowledged Indian predominance. But there were crucial differences in circumstances. The Monroe Doctrine was underwritten by the internationally supreme Royal Navy, safeguarded by the absence of regional competitors to the United States, and guaranteed by two vast oceans on either side inhibiting European intervention. The Indian navy could hardly challenge the most powerful navies in the world patrolling the Indian Ocean, and Pakistan was ever ready to deny Indian superiority. The Indira Doctrine remained an aspiration, or a rhetorical football, not a reality.

In September 1972 Prime Minister Indira Gandhi approved the building of a nuclear explosive device. India's civil nuclear programme was initiated in 1944 under the leadership of Homi Bhabha.[13] He was killed in an air crash in January 1966 and his two immediate successors heading India's Atomic Energy Commission concentrated on building India's space programme. Notwithstanding vigorous public debates on the issue of weaponization after China's nuclear tests of 1964 and foreign pressure to sign the NPT of 1968, New Delhi took no decision to alter its emphasis on nuclear energy for generation of electric power and other peaceful purposes *alone*. Protected from public scrutiny by a wall of secrecy created by the Atomic Energy Act of 1962, a small group of Indian scientists undertook research into *all* aspects of nuclear energy at the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre and demanded recognition of their achievements. The idea of India's 'nuclear option' was born, but not acted upon. Indira Gandhi's government claimed the moral high ground by professing no intention of seeking nuclear weapons and remaining staunchly anti-nuclear weapons and pro-nuclear disarmament in its diplomacy, even while denouncing the NPT as 'discriminatory' and unworthy of signature by nuclear have-nots.

In keeping with this ambiguity, the underground nuclear test conducted at Pokhran in the Rajasthan desert in May 1974 was officially labelled 'peaceful' (peaceful nuclear explosive—PNE). The Indian public, however, overwhelmingly welcomed it as proof that India now had an 'atom bomb'. Many, including perhaps Indira Gandhi herself, saw the PNE as a symbol of India's multifaceted strength demanding international recognition for India's enhanced scientific and technological capability. Also, Indian naval expeditions went to Antarctica and India became a signatory to the Antarctica Treaty. India participated actively in the long process of drafting the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1973–82) and was the seventh country in the world to undertake deep-sea mining for manganese and phosphorus beyond its Exclusive Economic Zone. Mrs Gandhi considered all these achievements, including the PNE, as deserving of enhanced international status, a realist's objective.

What she did not anticipate, and was powerless to prevent, was the hostile Western reaction to India's PNE, leading to global measures to stop nuclear proliferation. The United States amended its foreign assistance laws in 1976 to exclude non-signatories to the NPT with nuclear programmes, the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) issued strict new guidelines in 1977, and the US Congress passed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act in 1978. These measures hit India hard for decades, especially because of technology

denial and the logical follow-up to Pokhran I was postponed for 24 years to May 1998, ordered by a different government. Moreover, by the mid-1970s economic and political conditions within India were deteriorating badly and Mrs Gandhi's imposition of Emergency Rule for 20 months (1975–7) further weakened Indian public institutions and damaged India's reputation as a democracy. The excesses of the Emergency led to the humiliating defeat of the Congress Party in the parliamentary elections of 1977.

Realists often overestimate the role of tangible power and underestimate the importance of institutions, ideas, and other attributes of what is now termed 'soft power' in international relations. Indira Gandhi seems to have made the same error with respect to India's supremacy in South Asia. Having asserted military might to defeat Pakistan and economic strength to subdue Nepal, she made no attempt to build an institutional structure around the cultural, economic, geographic, and historical factors knitting together the separate political entities cohabiting South Asia. On the contrary, she was cool to the idea of a multilateral South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation when President Ziaur Rahman of Bangladesh first proposed it early in her second term of office. Several possible reasons can be offered for then ignoring what appears to be a realist's common sense, that is, Indian leadership of multilateral coordination at a regional level in South Asia.[14]

First, there exists in India a deep-rooted fear, going back in time and certainly held by Mrs Gandhi, that domestic secessionists and smaller neighbours would be manipulated by and combine with an external power to squeeze India. As she observed in July 1981, '[i]t is not good for us economically, militarily, or from any other point of view to have weak neighbours. Some of our present problems are because they are so unstable. But we also think there is a deliberate move to keep the subcontinent unstable' (Mansingh 1984: 262). Not surprisingly, smaller neighbours exhibited what can be called a 'Raj complex', the opposite fear of being absorbed or taken over by India, and leaned outwards to the United States or China for countervailing support.

Second, there was a lack of a common strategic perspective in South Asia in the absence of an obvious common enemy similar to what provided the basis for the best contemporary example of regional integration, Western Europe. On the contrary, the Partition of India in 1947 and subsequent wars between Pakistan and India froze conflicting strategic perspectives in the two largest states of South Asia and prevented any regional cooperation. Even the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan after December 1979 could not bridge the chasm, though the New Delhi Declaration of the Non-aligned Foreign Ministers Conference of February 1981 chaired by India contained a paragraph on Afghanistan jointly drafted by officials from India and Pakistan; it called for withdrawal of foreign troops and full respect for the independence and non-aligned status of Afghanistan. As is well known, Mrs Gandhi saw the American military build-up in the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean following the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979 as equally, or more, threatening to India's interests, and her private remonstrance to Soviet leaders asking for withdrawal of troops of Afghanistan had no effect on them (Dixit 1998: 135–44). On the other hand, Pakistan obtained huge military assistance from the United States and with further assistance from Saudi Arabia created an anti-Soviet

religious force of mujahidin, which served the purpose in the 1980s but later became problematic for all of South Asia.

A third important reason for a lack of regional cooperation in South Asia under Mrs Gandhi's leadership was economic. She presided over an autarkic and stagnant economy in India that was incapable then of offering the non-reciprocal concessions to its neighbours first suggested by Prime Minister I. K. Gujral in 1997 and put into effect by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's government after 2004. This goal of building an economic community in South Asia in which all would be lifted by India's economic dynamism and generosity could not have been articulated by Mrs Gandhi, though she too called for a peaceful, harmonious, and non-aligned region and was convinced of her own, and India's, benevolence. After her return to office in 1980, Mrs Gandhi did modify economic policies and made a serious effort of reconciliation with the United States, but she did not attempt wholesale reform and opening up, such as that initiated by Deng Xiaoping in China.

Realism is most simply defined as the practice of accepting a situation as it is and being prepared to deal with it pragmatically. Mrs Gandhi's foreign policy responded to changes in the international environment in the 1970s and 1980s realistically. One of the most important developments of that time was the Organization of Oil Exporting Countries (OPEC) taking a tough stand on royalties and prices with respect to international (predominantly Western) oil companies. OPEC raised the price of crude oil three times between 1973 and 1975, cut oil production, and announced an embargo on supplies to the most conspicuous friends of Israel. This first 'oil price crisis' threw the United States into a panic and was followed by another in 1980. Energy-starved India, heavily dependent on oil imports from the Persian Gulf region, especially Iran and Iraq, reacted pragmatically. Mrs Gandhi exchanged very cordial state visits with the Shah of Iran in 1973–4, ignoring his alliance with the United States and earlier support for Pakistan. They agreed to exchange iron ore from a site in western India to be developed with Iranian finance with petroleum from Iran then amounting to nearly half of India's oil imports. The arrangement continued after the Shah was overthrown. Mrs Gandhi appointed a Persian-speaking senior diplomat as ambassador to Khomeini's Iran in order to keep relations on an even keel. She also maintained ties with the secular Saddam Hussein and strengthened economic ties with Iraq. But an Indian-led delegation from the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) attempting to mediate a ceasefire in the eight-year disastrous Iraq–Iran War failed. Mrs Gandhi's visit to Saudi Arabia in 1983 epitomized a diplomatic breakthrough. And the rulers of the smaller members of the Gulf Cooperation Council all had affectionate ties with India. The Persian Gulf region is of vital strategic and economic interest to India, a near neighbour. Migration of skilled and unskilled Indians to the region in large numbers resulted in rising levels of foreign exchange remittances to India as well as many human problems. But Mrs Gandhi's governments did not attempt a strategic maritime engagement with the Persian Gulf (Singh 1998). Since then India has remained a dismayed witness to the increasing militarization, sectarian violence, and Islamization of that region.

India was a constant vocal and active participant in United Nations and NAM meetings focusing on the needs of the developing countries in a world economy weighted in favour of the already wealthy, and Mrs Gandhi enjoyed high prestige among them. During the 1970s, the needs of the disadvantaged, referred to as the Group of 77, were condensed into demands for a New International Economic Order. This called for better terms of trade, increased access to markets and development assistance, renegotiation of debts, a code of conduct for transnational corporations, a larger share in the international transmission of information, and an audible voice in the decision-making of multilateral institutions. The concept of collective self-reliance or South–South cooperation was also articulated. The Most Seriously Affected capitals—in poor, oil-importing countries as in South Asia—were hopeful that investments from newly enlarged funds of petrodollars from OPEC countries would cushion their increased costs. These hopes were soon belied. Developing countries including India continued to look to developed countries and multilateral institutions such as the World Bank for their needs. India extended development and technical assistance mainly to its immediate neighbours and Indian Ocean littoral states.

Indira Gandhi recognized the growing importance of the Persian Gulf region but, surprisingly, overlooked the potential of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) formed in 1967. At that time India had declined the invitation to join, and when the invitation was repeated in 1980, differences of policy on Vietnam and Kampuchea prevented consummation. An important opportunity was missed and India–ASEAN relations flourished only after 1992. What Mrs Gandhi did recognize on returning to power in 1980 was interest in the PRC and United States in improving relations with India so as to override its perceived closeness to the Soviet Union. She had already candidly informed Soviet leaders of her refusal to join any broad security arrangement in Asia sponsored by them, and advised them to withdraw forces from Afghanistan, so that relations registered a downward drift in her second term (Dixit 1998: 154–7). Mrs Gandhi also sent India's most senior and experienced diplomats to explore new possibilities in Washington and Beijing.[15]

The serious disagreement on US uranium supplies to India's atomic reactor at Tarapur, suspended after the 1974 PNE, was resolved amicably with France taking over the role of supplier. Newly elected US President Ronald Reagan met Indira Gandhi at Cancun in 1981 and invited her for a state visit to the United States in the summer of 1982. It proved to be a triumph of charm that heralded a beginning of reversing the negative image of India in the United States and making possible a future partnership, as presently exists. Mrs Gandhi and Mao Zedong of China had tentatively attempted to establish cordial contact between 1969 and 1971 but failed. Nevertheless, in 1976 Mrs Gandhi re-established ambassadorial relations with China suspended in 1960, and in 1979 A. B. Vajpayee, Foreign Minister of the Janata government, made an official visit to China. Deng Xiaoping, the new supreme leader of China, offered encouraging words on reopening the pilgrimage route to Mount Kailash in western Tibet and resolving the border problem along the lines suggested by Zhou Enlai in 1960:[16] that is, a mutual relinquishment of conflicting claims in the eastern and western sectors of the long frontier. Mrs Gandhi wished to

pursue this opening on return to power in 1980 and the long-suspended pilgrimages to Kailash/Mansarovar recommenced in 1981. The border problem was more intractable. Perhaps because suspicions remained on both sides and the conflicting points of view in New Delhi caused hesitation, that perceived opportunity for settlement was lost. No progress could be made in India–China relations until after Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's ice-breaking visit in 1988 (Mansingh 2013).

Mrs Gandhi's foreign policy largely conformed to the basic principles of realism as a political theory (Morgenthau (1961 [1948]: ch.1). She certainly saw national interest in terms of tangible power rather than morality and was acutely aware of India's economic and military weaknesses. She tacitly accepted the leverage the two superpowers exerted against India and was careful to keep the tone of her statements and actions below the level of outright conflict with either of them. She was willing to use India's military prowess to subdue an adversary. She was also prudent in defending India's autonomy of action through non-alignment but avoided advocating that path for others as her father had done. Some Western and Indian commentators read the Indo-Soviet Treaty as an abandonment of non-alignment, as others had seen Nehru's acceptance of American assistance after China's attack in 1962 as contradicting non-alignment, but both acted to protect national security and assert India's strategic autonomy as the core of non-alignment. Although described as 'leftist' or 'populist', Mrs Gandhi was not ideological in her economic policies and began a process of opening up in her second term of office. Did her foreign policy reflect a shift towards 'hard realism'? Perhaps so, if measured against her father's recod. But if hard realism is defined as devoting all energy towards building comprehensive national power and then exerting it over other states, Indira Gandhi falls far short, for several reasons.

For a start, Indira Gandhi saw power in personal, or dynastic, terms and not institutional ones (Sahgal 1982; see also Carras 1979). She described India as resilient and eternal, but she did not strengthen the institutions that made it so, or build the sinews of comprehensive national power: human, industrial, military, political, and technological (Tellis 2000). India continued to be perceived as a 'soft state' with Mrs Gandhi's hard Emergency rule an aberration, not a norm. Some small investment was made in defence, and diplomacy continued to be vigorous, but no coordinating body such as a National Security Council might have become was created. Mrs Gandhi herself and the Prime Minister's secretariat provided the only sources of coordination for different branches of government, diluting the efficacy of all. Mrs Gandhi was acutely sensitive to criticism in the foreign and domestic media and communicated very well with the Indian masses, yet did not build any mechanisms for public information on India's policies, with the striking exception of the multifaceted campaign carried out in 1971. Insurgencies and sectarian violence within India were surely the biggest handicaps to a successful foreign policy and accretion of power, but Indira Gandhi's mismanagement of domestic affairs after returning to power in 1980, especially in the states of Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab, contributed largely to insurrections supported by Pakistan. Had she been a 'hard realist', Mrs Gandhi should have dealt sternly and effectively with Pakistan, but did not. In short, Indira Gandhi was pragmatic, goal-oriented, non-ideological and flexible

in her foreign policy, qualifying her as a realist, but not the 'hard realist' conjured up in her Durga image of leadership style (Steinberg 2008: 72).

Notes

1. Oriana Fallaci, 'A Talk with Indira Gandhi', *McCall's* (New York, June 1973).
2. The titles of two of the most cited books on Indira Gandhi's foreign policy are illustrative: Shashi Tharoor, *Reasons of State* (1982) and Surjit Mansingh, *India's Search for Power* (1984).
3. See, for example, Carr (1939); Morgenthau (1948); Waltz (1979).
4. Allison (1971) remains the classic analysis of those 13 days.
5. See ch. 24 in Kissinger (1979): 'Nixon's Trip to China'.
6. Bass (2013) and Raghavan (2013) give details of US involvement in those events.
7. See ch. 2 in Wheeler (2000): 'India as Rescuer? Order versus Justice in the Bangladesh War of 1971'.
8. See ch. 6 in Chaudhuri (2014): 'Diaoyutai'.
9. Agreement on Public Law 480, 13 December 1973.
10. Bhutto's Foreign Secretary Sultan Khan gave this information to the author in an interview, Washington, DC, 1982.
11. See ch. 9 in Dhar (2000): 'Mrs Gandhi, Bhutto, and the Simla Agreement'.
12. Seminar on G. Parthasarathy at the India International Centre, New Delhi, 13 August 2013.
13. Excellent studies of India's nuclear programme are found in: Abraham (1999); Chengappa (2000); Cohen (2001: ch. 6); Perkowich (1999); Srinivasan (2002); Tellis (2001).
14. See ch. 6 in Mansingh (1984): 'Cooperation, Strife or Hegemony? India and its Smaller Neighbours'.
15. Eric Gonsalves, oral history recorded at the Nehru Museum and Library, New Delhi.
16. Deng Xiaoping interview with Subramanium Swami, UNI, 8 April 1981.

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CHAPTER 9

AT THE CUSP OF TRANSFORMATION

The Rajiv Gandhi Years, 1984–1989

SRINATH RAGHAVAN

THE early 1990s are usually regarded as a watershed moment in Indian foreign policy (Pant 2009). The collapse of the Soviet Union and the decision to liberalize the Indian economy dramatically transformed the markers and imperatives of foreign policy and resulted in far-reaching changes in India's engagement with the world. Whilst the transformation in direction and scope of foreign policy is undeniable, the timing of the turnaround can be exaggerated. This chapter argues that some of the key changes of the post-1991 period were prefigured in India's foreign policy from the mid-1980s during the tenure of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. This is not to credit Rajiv Gandhi with great foresight or achievement, but rather to suggest that the orientation of foreign policy had begun to change earlier and that the events of the early 1990s served more as catalysts than as triggers of transformation. In some ways, this argument mirrors the debates around the liberalization of the Indian economy. Although conventional wisdom remains in thrall to 1991 as the decisive moment of transformation (for instance, Das 2009), much of the latest research shows that there was an 'attitudinal' change and shift in policy about a decade earlier (Rodrik and Subramanian 2004; Kohli 2012; Virmani 2004).

The incipient shift in foreign policy under Rajiv Gandhi stemmed from a conjunction of internal and external factors. Gandhi was sworn in as Prime Minister hours after the assassination of his mother on 31 October 1984. In the mid-term elections held in December 1984, Gandhi's party, the Congress (I), surfed a wave of sympathy and played on fears about national integrity to secure an unprecedented victory. In a record voter turnout of 64.1 per cent, the Congress (I) won 48.1 per cent of the votes and 415 of the 517 seats at stake. It was stunning performance—one that surpassed the party's record under Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi. And it handed Rajiv Gandhi an unassailable majority in Parliament and dominance in the party. Gandhi's ascendance was

striking in yet another way. At 41, he was the youngest Prime Minister the country had had and the youngest supremo of the ruling party. Furthermore, he was a recent entrant into politics, having been catapulted into the arena in 1980 after the death of his younger brother who had been groomed for succession by Indira Gandhi. In consequence, Rajiv Gandhi was relatively unburdened both by the ideological and political legacy of his mother and by the traditional mores and circuits of power in the party. This was perhaps best exemplified by Gandhi's mauling criticism of his colleagues on the occasion of the Congress's centenary in 1985, wherein he denounced the corruption as well as the decline of morality and discipline amongst members of the party (Jaffrelot 2012: 48). Although the Prime Minister's political clout would begin to wane a couple of years down the line, it remained strong enough for him to press ahead with important moves on the international stage.

These moves, in turn, were undertaken in response to a set of interlinked global, regional, and domestic imperatives. Soon after Gandhi assumed office, the international scene began to change. In 1985 Mikhail Gorbachev came to power in the Soviet Union. Rajiv Gandhi and his advisers recognized the implications for India of Gorbachev's willingness to reach out and work with the United States as well as the internal economic and political restructuring of the USSR announced in his famous speech at Vladivostok. For one thing, this implied that the leverage held by India owing to its non-aligned posture in the Cold War would dwindle. In particular, New Delhi could not take for granted the benefits flowing from its special relationship with Moscow. India would also have to recalibrate its relations with the United States and reconsider its approach towards China (Dixit 2003: 170–1).

These considerations also bore upon India's regional policy. Gorbachev's willingness to pull Soviet troops out of Afghanistan would increase Pakistan's influence and embolden it to support the secessionist movement in Indian Punjab. Indeed, Pakistan was already benefiting from US military and financial aid for the Afghan jihad and from conventional and nuclear weapons cooperation with China. Of equal concern was the worsening situation in Sri Lanka, where security forces and Tamil rebels were waging a civil war. Further, the Sri Lankan government had begun flirting with the United States and other external players in order to dissuade India from adopting a pro-Tamil stance. Tamil Nadu was close to the boil from the fall-out of the crisis in Sri Lanka. Stability in the neighbourhood, in turn, was critical to address several immediate domestic problems. Gandhi's government inherited a rash of internal crises: in Punjab, Assam, Mizoram, and Kashmir.

More generally, Rajiv Gandhi recognized the importance of foreign policy in furthering his domestic objectives. In one of his first speeches in office, Gandhi stated his intention to 'build for an India of the twenty-first century'.[1] At the core of his notion of modernization was the need to embrace high-technology, particularly information technology, to transform the Indian economy and society (Sharma 2009: 124–73). Access to cutting-edge technology was contingent on cultivating appropriate external relationships. It also necessitated increased trade with the outside world. 'Exports must become a major focus of Indian industry', he observed. 'A rapidly growing modernizing

economy will need a growing volume of imports and an expanding flow of technology. We can only pay for the inflow if we can pay more than we are doing now' (cited in Kapur 1994: 70). Indeed, the government took several measures to relax import restrictions and encourage exports (Panagariya 2008: 90–1). The importance of India's external engagements for its internal transformation would become a lode-star of foreign policy in the 1990s and after.

Reaching out to America

Given these considerations, it is not surprising that fine-tuning relations with the superpowers figured high on Rajiv Gandhi's priorities. By the time he came into office, the relationship with the United States was on the mend. The renewed embrace of Pakistan by the United States in the wake of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan as well as the need to obtain US support to receive much-needed assistance from international financial institutions had led Indira Gandhi to reach out to the Reagan administration. Mrs Gandhi's visit to the United States in July 1982 led to a long-overdue, if limited, rapprochement in US–India relations. Rajiv Gandhi continued and intensified this trend. In particular, he realized the importance of the United States in securing access to cutting-edge technology. By the early 1980s, it was evident that the United States had far outstripped the USSR in information and defence technology.

A month after Gandhi's assumption of office, New Delhi concluded negotiations with Washington on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on technology transfer. The MOU was formally signed in May 1985 prior to Gandhi's visit to Washington. The same month, US Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, Fred Ikle, came to New Delhi to explore prospects for increased cooperation on security. In his interactions, Ikle observed that it was in India's own interest to avoid greater Soviet involvement in South Asia, especially in Afghanistan. He also discussed the possibility of the United States cooperating with India on the development of its Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) (Kux 1992: 402).

In his meeting with Ronald Reagan the following month, Gandhi sought to assure the American President that India was cognizant of US concerns about the Soviet presence in Afghanistan. Reagan noted that '[h]e made it plain to me that while he wants to maintain friendly relations over the years with the Soviet U. [sic], at the same time however he says India does not want Soviet U. to have a foothold anywhere in S. Asia [sic].'[2] When Gandhi raised the problems created for India by American military supplies to Pakistan, Reagan promised 'to ease those strains'.[3] Rajiv Gandhi was also invited to address a joint session of the US Congress—a privilege that was never extended to Indira Gandhi. Replying at the banquet hosted by President Reagan, Gandhi made clear his interest in seeking an expanded relationship with the United States. Without referring to US assistance to Pakistan,

he emphasized India's 'apprehensions at the growing militarisation of the region around India, which is increasing our burdens'. 'India today is poised for greater growth', he asserted, 'we must necessarily acquire the most advance knowledge wherever it is generated'.[4]

The Reagan administration, especially the Pentagon, was open to selling arms to India, but the Indians were keener on joint development and production rather than outright purchases of American systems. Securing American participation in the LCA ranked highest on the Indian agenda. More specifically, they wanted the administration to approve the transfer of General Electric 404 jet engines. India wanted to import the Cray supercomputer, XMP-24. Although Indian officials insisted that they wanted the supercomputer for meteorological purposes, the Americans baulked at the request. The administration as well as the American non-proliferation lobby were alert to the fact that the machine's computational prowess could be deployed for designing nuclear warheads and ballistic missiles besides other security applications. Meeting Gandhi later that year, Reagan assured the Indian Prime Minister that he wanted to approve this sale. But the American bureaucracy continued to erect hurdles. Eventually, in 1987, the administration approved the sale of a supercomputer of lesser capacity, Cray XMP-14. At the same time, the United States soft-pedalled cooperation with India on the LCA (Perkovich 1999: 268–9).

Disappointment on this score was compounded by continuing difficulties in other issues. On the one hand, India noted with chagrin the continued supply of US arms to Pakistan as well as the Reagan administration's willingness to overlook Pakistan's clandestine development of a nuclear capability (National Security Archive 2013). On the other hand, India's insistence on limiting US involvement in its immediate neighbourhood, especially Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Nepal, lent credence to American views about New Delhi's hegemonic aspirations in South Asia and ensured the administration's continued support for Pakistan. Furthermore, India and the United States continued to hold different positions on a range of other international issues: Afghanistan, Nicaragua, and Vietnam.

That said, India and the United States maintained a 'minimal realistic and positive orientation' right until the end of Gandhi's term in 1989 (Dixit 2003: 174–5). Notwithstanding the various delays and disappointments, there was no return to the frosty atmosphere of the 1970s. This was partly because of India's unwillingness to let the relationship be hostage to specific demands and its engagement with a wider range of actors within the United States. For instance, Rajiv Gandhi met representatives of pro-Israel American groups several times and gave a sympathetic hearing to their demands for full diplomatic recognition of Israel by India. New Delhi also signalled its willingness to move towards normalization of ties by upgrading the status of the Israeli consular mission in Bombay and, more prominently, by hosting the Israeli tennis team for a Davis Cup match in 1987 (Kumaraswamy 2010: 227–33). Here too, Gandhi's policy foreshadowed the course taken by India after 1991. It is no exaggeration to argue that the background conditions for further improvement in ties with the United States were set during the Rajiv Gandhi years.

The Russian Embrace

On 13 March 1985, Rajiv Gandhi reached Moscow to attend the funeral of the deceased Soviet supremo, Konstantin Chernenko. The Indian Prime Minister was quietly taken to the front of a line of visiting dignitaries (including Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher of Britain) and introduced to the new general secretary, Mikhail Gorbachev. It was a symbolic yet strong affirmation of the importance of the Indo-Soviet relationship. In May 1985, Gandhi returned to Moscow for his first summit with Gorbachev. The visit was a success. The Soviet leadership was impressed by Gandhi's critical stance on US support to Pakistan for the Afghan War as well as the deployment of Pershing missiles in Europe. Gandhi apparently assured Gorbachev that whilst he was interested in obtaining high technology from the United States, Indians would 'never sacrifice their principles for this end'. In the wake of the visit, India was pleased that it 'got practically everything from the USSR it asked for' (cited in Radchenko 2011: 178).

Rajiv Gandhi's approach to the Soviet Union was shaped by three key considerations. First, the strategic relationship with Moscow served as a balancing factor in India's dealings with Pakistan, China, and the United States. With the shift in Moscow's global policy following Gorbachev's advent, India needed to ensure that its importance was not downgraded. Second, the Soviet Union remained the key supplier of military systems to India and as such the relationship was crucial to India's security. Third, trade and economic ties with the Soviet Union were important to India. Not only was the Soviet Union an important market for Indian exports, but India imported crucial energy and industrial items. What is more, the terms of trade were generously structured in India's favour.

The meetings between Gandhi and Gorbachev in 1985 and 1986 went a considerable way in enhancing economic and military cooperation. Gorbachev offered new lines of credit amounting to 2.5 billion roubles—a sum that hugely exceeded the 900 million roubles extended over the past three decades. Moscow further extended technical assistance for Indian projects in the energy sector, including the Tehri hydroelectric power plant, the Jharia coal mines, and oil exploration in West Bengal. India also secured a slew of Soviet military systems including MiG-29 fighter aircraft, transporters, helicopters, submarines, and destroyers. Besides, India was given licences to manufacture the MiG-27 fighter aircraft, the T-72 battle tank, and the BMP-2 armoured personnel carrier (Racioppi 1994: 151, 167). Nevertheless, as the Soviet economy started to come apart at its seams, economic ties deteriorated sharply and the military supply relationship began to look rocky as well.

On the wider strategic front, too, the relationship visibly shrank during these years. Two issues proved particularly problematic. Gorbachev's proposals for promoting collective security in Asia—first adumbrated in his Vladivostok speech—did not elicit a favourable response from Gandhi. When Gorbachev broached the issue during his visit to Delhi in 1986, Gandhi merely listened and held out no commitment (Racioppi 1994:

168). Gandhi's refusal to respond eventually led Gorbachev to take a starkly negative view of India's policy: 'in India, we are faced with a great power policy ... India wants everyone to "rotate" around it: Burma, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Maldives etc. In other words, it wants to have a "patrimony" with vassals in the region. That's why it is not reacting well to our initiatives about naval disarmament in the Indian Ocean' (Radchenko 2011: 187).

Second, and more important, were India's concerns about Soviet policy towards Afghanistan and Pakistan. For one thing, New Delhi was worried about Moscow's inclination to pull its troops out of Afghanistan without leaving a stable and sustainable government. As Gandhi told Gorbachev in July 1987, 'if Afghanistan becomes a fundamentalist country or if the Americans have a strong influence there, like in Pakistan, Afghanistan will not be a truly independent country, and this will create problems for us'.[5] Later, Gorbachev caustically observed that '[t]he Indians are concerned that a normalization of the situation in Afghanistan will result in Pakistan directing its subversive activities against India ... But this position takes only India's interests into account 100 percent while the interests of Afghanistan and the Soviet Union are a mere 20 percent.'[6] By early 1988 it became clear that Moscow would pull out its troops under the cover of a weak agreement involving Pakistan. Meeting Gorbachev in February 1988, the Indian defence minister, K. C. Pant, pointed out that US weapon stockpiles in Pakistan, not least the Stinger missiles, could fall into the hands of terrorists. Moscow, he argued, should demand the scrapping of these stocks. Gorbachev demurred. If they demanded this, the United States would call for the removal of Soviet arms in Afghanistan: 'and then the whole process would get stuck. And we don't want to leave Najib naked.'[7]

For another, India was concerned that in order to encourage Pakistan and the United States to maintain stability in Afghanistan after the Soviet withdrawal, Moscow was apparently diluting Soviet support for India on such crucial issues as Kashmir and non-proliferation (Dixit 2003: 180). By the end of Rajiv Gandhi's term in office, it was evident that relations with the Soviet Union would need to be entirely recast.

Nuclear Weapons

Gorbachev's attempts to transform the Soviet Union's relations with the United States and China not only posed challenges for India but also provided an opening for fresh foreign policy initiatives. And Rajiv Gandhi moved boldly on two fronts. The first of these was on the question of nuclear proliferation and disarmament. Gandhi came into office with a pronounced aversion to nuclear weapons and deep scepticism about their utility to India. This set the stage for a strained relationship with India's nuclear scientific-bureaucratic establishment. At the same time, it was clear to New Delhi that Pakistan was pressing ahead with its own nuclear bomb programme with the active support of China and the benign neglect of the United States. In late 1985, Gandhi formed a small group of experts to assess the costs of a nuclear deterrent. The Prime Minister, however, had no desire to move towards weaponization and operationalization of

India's nuclear capabilities. Yet, he did not stop the nuclear establishment from working quietly to enhance India's capacity to build and deliver nuclear weapons (Perkovich 1999: 269–92).

During this period, India was under some pressure from the United States to adopt a policy of mutual restraint with Pakistan, including the idea of mutual inspections of each other's nuclear facilities. New Delhi was as loath to considering this idea as it was to signing up to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Meantime, the Indian government had been closely following the arms control talks between the superpowers. At the Reykjavik Summit of 1986, Reagan and Gorbachev had even discussed complete elimination of nuclear weapons, though they failed to reach an agreement. This dramatically changing context provided an opening for India both to strike a bold normative stance and to safeguard its own interests. Rajiv Gandhi advocated global nuclear disarmament as the only solution to the problem of proliferation. This admixture of idealism and realpolitik can be discerned in his decision to host a six-nation summit on nuclear disarmament in January 1985. Speaking at the summit, he warned that the 'balance of terror ... is at best a grey peace, precarious and unstable'. He went on to note that '[m]uch is made of the danger of horizontal proliferation [i.e. by countries like India]. But the dangers of present stockpiles, their vertical proliferation and the risk of catastrophe by error or design are slurred over.'[8] A year on, he noted that talks between Reagan and Gorbachev in Geneva had 'raised a flicker of hope', yet 'no specific binding arrangements are coming out. What we need is an immediate halt to all nuclear testing.'[9]

Following the Reykjavik Summit, the Prime Minister observed that 'there was clear demonstration that, given political will, far-reaching agreement on nuclear disarmament measures could be achieved'.[10] Later that year, he persuaded Gorbachev to issue a joint declaration calling for complete elimination of nuclear weapons by the year 2000. In 1988, Rajiv Gandhi advanced at the UN a more carefully thought-out 'Action Plan' for complete nuclear disarmament. The plan envisaged a series of phased, verifiable and non-discriminatory steps to achieve total elimination of nuclear weapons in 22 years. Assessments about the practicality and utopian impulses of the plan may differ. But it is undeniable that the Plan helped create an alternate discourse that not only enabled India to retain the nuclear option but also to stave off subsequent pressures to join the NPT. It is a measure of its success on this score that two decades on, when faced with calls for 'global zero' from influential quarters in the West, the Indian government chose to dust off the Rajiv Gandhi Action Plan and advance an updated version.

Chinese Challenge

Far more consequential to India was the other move made by Gandhi in response to the changing dynamics of the Cold War: the rapprochement with China. In his landmark speech at Vladivostok, Gorbachev had called for a collective security system in Asia that included China. This was a sharp departure from earlier Soviet proposals like

the Brezhnev plan for Asian security, which was essentially aimed at containing China. Thereafter Gorbachev moved steadily towards defusing tensions with China. New Delhi was kept informed throughout. Whilst this shift in Soviet stance loosened one of the lynchpins of the Indo-Soviet relationship, Rajiv Gandhi and his advisers also saw the possibility of an improved relationship with China.

Underpinning the move to seek a proper rapprochement was a set of considerations. First, New Delhi realized that continued tensions with China hung around its neck like a strategic albatross. Since 1982, the two sides had held eight rounds of talks on their boundary dispute with little result. Second, following the launch of economic reforms in China since the early 1980s, the economic gap between China and India was quickly widening. Finally, the burden of a militarized border with China became increasingly difficult to sustain owing to India's internal fiscal commitments, the tensions with Pakistan, and Indian intervention in Sri Lanka (discussed below). This was cast sharply into relief by the stand-off against the Chinese in the Sumdorong Chu valley along the disputed border in Arunachal Pradesh.

In response to the Chinese troop presence in this area in the summer of 1986, the Indian army chief, General K. S. Sundarji, moved some Indian forces right athwart the Chinese built-up position. When an Indian demarche failed to elicit any response from Beijing, an entire brigade of the Indian army was airlifted close to Sumdorong Chu. The Chinese responded with a build-up of their forces. In December 1986, New Delhi granted full statehood to Arunachal Pradesh, so emphasizing its hold over the region. The Chinese response was predictably strong and soon a serious crisis seemed to loom. In May 1987, Prime Minister Gandhi sent the Foreign Minister to Beijing—a move that paved the way for a resolution of the stand-off.

The Sumdorong Chu episode drove home the importance of ensuring a stable border with China and, more importantly, of seeking a new and broader basis for the relationship with China—one that would not be focused solely on boundary questions. Gandhi and his advisers felt that China too might be open to a rapprochement owing to similar considerations. From mid-1987, New Delhi opened several lines of back-channel communication with Beijing to probe the latter's mind about a possible visit to China by the Prime Minister. However, attempting such a dramatic move—the first prime ministerial visit to Beijing in 34 years—required overcoming strong opposition both within and outside the Congress Party. The sources of this opposition were many and various: memory of the humiliating defeat of 1962; the experience of Foreign Minister A. B. Vajpayee's abortive visit in 1979; and pro-Tibetan lobbies that hinted at appeasement. Gandhi had the numerical majority, but his own position was under siege following allegations of kick-backs in the Bofors weapons procurement deal. Once China extended the invitation, the Prime Minister reached out to all significant political leaders across the spectrum, but he was determined to proceed in any case. Extensive preparations were undertaken to ensure that the visit did not undermine the Prime Minister's position. For instance, the joint statement to be issued during the visit was negotiated with the Chinese six weeks before Gandhi reached Beijing.

In the event, the visit of December 1988 was more successful than New Delhi had anticipated. In his marathon five-hour meeting with Premier Li Peng, Gandhi advanced a proposal to establish three working groups: one each to deal with the boundary issue, economic relations, and science and technology. The Chinese premier accepted this idea. The two leaders also established substantial convergence in their assessments of key international issues (Singh 2009: 120–1). On 21 December Gandhi met Deng Xiaoping. The meeting began with a prolonged and warm handshake in front of the cameras—an image that captured the mood of their interaction. Deng emphasized that China would in the coming decades focus on its economic development and that it desired a peaceful external environment to do so. Gandhi, for his part, stated that India too was focused on modernization of its economy and that the waning of the Cold War could create a more propitious context for India's development (Singh 2009: 127–31).

In the aftermath of this successful trip to Beijing, Rajiv Gandhi sought to downplay claims about a major breakthrough. 'I take a more pragmatic view', he said, 'I see it as a new beginning' (Bobb 1989). It was an apt description. For his visit had broken with the past and created a new paradigm for India's ties with China. Whilst there was a commitment to addressing the thorny issue of the disputed border, there was a recognition that both countries had to widen their engagement on several other fronts. This would help ensure that outstanding disputes did not sap their energies and that both sides would have a benign environment in which to pursue their domestic transformation. Rajiv Gandhi's visit set the terms for the China policies of all subsequent Indian governments. It was his finest hour.

Regional Crises

The sequence of events leading up to the China visit underscored an important aspect of Rajiv Gandhi's approach to foreign policy and crisis management. He was prepared to make strategic moves to demonstrate resolve in protecting Indian interests, while simultaneously exploring diplomatic options to settle problems. Interestingly, this approach to the fundamental questions of war and peace bore resemblance that of Jawaharlal Nehru (Raghavan 2010). Nowhere was this more evident than in his policies towards India's neighbours. The regional situation confronting Gandhi from his earliest days in office was turbulent. Pakistan remained the principal adversary in the subcontinent with its pursuit of nuclear and conventional arms, and its support for Sikh separatists in Punjab and the mujahidin in Afghanistan. Sri Lanka was the most neuralgic issue inherited by Gandhi. And there were problems with other neighbours as well.

Gandhi's regional policies were shaped by two imperatives. India needed a stable periphery in order to focus on its own tasks of modernization and development and to reduce the burden of security preparedness. And India was keen to prevent further encroachment into its neighbourhood by the superpowers and China. The interplay

of these considerations could be seen in Gandhi's handling of crises with Maldives and Nepal.

In 1988, a coup was attempted to overthrow President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom of Maldives by 80 armed mercenaries from a Tamil secessionist group in Sri Lanka who landed in Male and took control of key government installations. Gayoom, however, eluded his enemies and sought military assistance from India, the United States, and the United Kingdom. In responding to this crisis, Gandhi juggled several considerations. For a start, the Maldives were crucial to India's interests in the Indian Ocean region in the face of an escalating superpower rivalry and presence in the Indian Ocean. India was a staunch advocate of the 1971 UN declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, but pious declarations would hardly suffice. President Gayoom was regarded favourably by Gandhi primarily due to his unwillingness to turn over the old British base on Gan Island to the United Kingdom or the United States and to enter into any security alliance with an external power. As Gandhi said during a visit to Male in 1986, 'You refused to ransom your independence.'[11] The coup was problematic not only because it threatened Gayoom, but because the Maldivian President had appealed to the United Kingdom and the United States for assistance as well. Nevertheless, parts of the Indian establishment preferred Gayoom's exit as the Tamil rebels, who had links to Indian intelligence agencies, might be more amenable to Indian control. In the event, Gandhi decided to airlift a battalion of paratroopers to Male. The swift intervention thwarted the coup and reinstalled Gayoom.

The crisis with Nepal was the result of a series of steps taken by King Birendra that were seen by New Delhi as inimical to its interests. Since the 1970s, Birendra had been propounding the idea that Nepal was equally close to India and China and had even advanced the idea of Nepal as a Zone of Peace. This went against the grain of the Indo-Nepal treaty of 1950 that ensured a close relationship between the two countries. By the mid-1980s Nepal was sending its military officers to train in Pakistan and China. In 1988, Nepal also imported a consignment of arms, including anti-aircraft guns, from China. Birendra also appeared to dilute other provisions of the 1950 accord, demanding for instance that Indian workers in Nepal should possess work permits. On 23 March 1989, the trade and transit treaties between India and Nepal lapsed. New Delhi took no immediate steps to press for an extension. On the contrary, India reduced the number of transit points for Nepal from 22 to 2, driving home to Birendra the costs of alienating India. Indeed, Nepal's gross domestic product dropped by 2.2 per cent in 1989–90. The outcome of India's coercive policy was mixed. On the one hand, it reinforced perceptions in the neighbourhood about India's hegemonic behaviour. On the other, it galvanized the pro-democracy groups within Nepal, which desired closer ties with India, and indirectly laid the ground for important domestic changes in Nepal (Ray 2011: 440–6).

Rajiv Gandhi's policies towards Pakistan yielded mixed outcomes as well. New Delhi's principal concerns were Pakistan's nuclear programme, its support for rebels in Punjab, and the ongoing military engagements over the Siachen glacier. Gandhi was willing to work with President Zia ul Haq on nuclear confidence-building measures and on the Siachen glacier. A crisis, however, was triggered by India's decision

to conduct a massive military exercise in Rajasthan named Brasstacks. The idea of a large-scale exercise was apparently mooted by the Prime Minister (who also held the defence portfolio) at the end of 1985. The army chief, General Sundarji, embraced it as an opportunity to test new doctrines and systems recently inducted into the armed forces. Accounts differ as to whether there was any larger political-military objective vis-à-vis Pakistan (Bajpai et al. 1995; Chari et al. 2007). In any event, Pakistan was rattled by the scale and scope of the exercise being conducted very close to its border.

Prime Minister Junejo of Pakistan met Gandhi on the margins of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) summit in November 1986 and expressed his concerns. Gandhi assured him that this was merely a training exercise and that it would be scaled down. However, this assurance was not conveyed to the military, which continued with the exercise as originally envisaged. Meanwhile, Pakistan moved its main offensive formations closer to the border. This led to some counter-deployment by the Indian army. Gandhi later told Gorbachev that '[i]t is quite possible that if we did not deploy our forces, the Pakistanis would be able to quickly grab a piece of our territory, proclaim "Khalistan" there, and hand it over to the Sikhs.' The Indian army, he added, was also 'itching' to have a go at Pakistan.[12] By January 1987, a major crisis was on hand and the superpowers urged India and Pakistan to back off from the brink of war. On 24 January 1987, Gandhi told the Pakistani envoy in New Delhi that the border situation needed to be rapidly defused. Official talks were announced soon after. Gandhi also invited President Zia to watch an India–Pakistan cricket match the following month. These moves not only led to de-escalation of the crisis but pointed the way towards normalization.

It was Zia's death in 1988 and the advent of Benazir Bhutto that created the conditions for moving ahead on relations with Pakistan. Gandhi swiftly reached out to Bhutto and their meetings generated much public enthusiasm. The two prime ministers agreed that even as they worked towards settling the Kashmir dispute, other more tractable problems such as such as Siachen and Sir Creek should be speedily addressed. They also agreed to revive the Indo-Pakistan Joint Commission as well as expand trade and liberalize visa requirements. In June 1989, both sides agreed to work towards demilitarization of the Siachen glacier (Dixit 2003: 197–9). But with elections coming up at the end of the year, Gandhi refrained from moving any further. Unsurprisingly, there was no progress on Kashmir either. Gandhi felt that Bhutto did not have enough leeway with her establishment to make any decisive moves. He recalled that during their meeting in Islamabad in December 1998, when 'the conversation touched sensitive subjects, she did not speak but wrote notes and handed them to me. I answered her in a similar manner. And all of this was in her office.'[13] The euphoria around Gandhi's meetings with Bhutto had yielded little by the time he left office. But the idea that India–Pakistan relations should not be held hostage to Kashmir and that Kashmir should be embedded in a comprehensive approach would live on in Indian foreign policy well after Gandhi departed from the scene.

Rajiv Gandhi's greatest failure, however, was in his handling of the Sri Lankan crisis (this account draws on Dixit 1998; Kalpage 1997; Mehrotra 2011; Bhasin 2001, 2004).

The failure of the All-Party Conference in Sri Lanka in December 1984 set the stage for a deeper Indian involvement in the affairs of the island. From the outset, Rajiv Gandhi sought to correct what he believed had been an excessively pro-Tamil approach under his predecessor and to adopt a more balanced stance. In a series of meetings between March 1985 and December 1986, New Delhi sought simultaneously to get the Tamils to renounce their demand for a separate state and the Sri Lankan government to restructure the political system to accommodate the legitimate demands of the Tamils. Both sides had little interest in negotiations and believed that the military balance was favourable to them. In January 1987, the Sri Lankan government launched a major military operation and blockaded the Jaffna peninsula. Thereafter, Prime Minister Gandhi decided to adopt a more robust stance. India would strongly oppose the military operation and bring to bear political pressure on President J. R. Jaywardene to implement proposals on devolution of power discussed since 1985. If Colombo proved amenable to this, New Delhi would bring the Tamils back to the negotiating table. Most importantly, India offered to guarantee the implementation of the negotiated settlement.When Jayawardene proved recalcitrant, Gandhi ordered an airdrop of supplies to Jaffna on 4 June 1987. The Sri Lankans protested the violation of their sovereignty but also agreed to negotiate with the Tamils. On 27 July 1987, the Indo-Sri Lankan agreement was signed.

Even at the time, it was evident that the Sri Lankan government and the Tamil rebels had been brought to the negotiating table kicking and screaming. Yet, Gandhi believed that the risks of not adopting an active role would be high. For one, an influx of Tamil refugees would destabilize the Indian state of Tamil Nadu. For another, there was the possibility that the conflict would provide a foot-hold for external powers in India's strategic vicinity. As Gandhi observed a couple of weeks before the agreement was signed, '[w]e think that the Americans want to obtain a base in Trincomalee. So far we have been able to apply sufficient pressure so that Sri Lanka does not agree to this. But in recent months, the leadership of Sri Lanka has come closer and closer to Pakistan and the US. They may even sign treaties with these two countries.'[14]

Gandhi's key advisers and officials were divided on whether the main Tamil group, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), would abide by the agreement. The Indian intelligence establishment took the view that the LTTE owed a lot to India and would fall into line. Others were not as sure. The Prime Minister seems to have taken comfort from the army chief's assurance that if the LTTE reneged on the accord, the Indian forces could neutralize it within two weeks (Dixit 1998: 155–6). However, the Indian Peacekeeping Force (IPKF) was soon drawn into a bloody and unwinnable guerrilla war with the LTTE. The mounting human costs of the operations further undercut Gandhi's diminishing domestic standing. And the Sri Lankan government turned hostile and began to press for the withdrawal of the IPKF. By the time Rajiv Gandhi finished his term in late 1989, it was obvious that his approach towards Sri Lanka had been a fiasco. A little over a year later, Rajiv Gandhi was cut down by an LTTE assassin.

Conclusion

Rajiv Gandhi had a single but eventful term in office. During these years, Indian foreign policy was significantly reoriented. Soon after coming to power, he realized that the global setting was undergoing far-reaching changes. The relaxation of the Cold War and Sino-Soviet tensions presented India with both challenges and opportunities. Gandhi moved in a sure-footed manner to recast India's relations with the United States and China. Although no major breakthroughs were achieved, his engagement with them set the tone and pattern for the approach and policy of all subsequent governments. He worked, less successfully, to find a new basis for dealing with a declining Soviet Union. In India's own neighbourhood, his policies had a more activist edge. But the outcomes were mixed—and in the case of Sri Lanka an undeniable failure.

Perhaps the most fundamental shift in foreign policy was Gandhi's recognition that India's modernization and economic development required greater and more adroit engagement with the world and that foreign policy had to be geared towards securing these objectives. Rajiv Gandhi may have been unable to translate this idea into demonstrable outcomes, but by the end of his tenure India's foreign policy stood at the cusp of a major transformation.

Notes

1. Broadcast to nation, 12 November 1984, *Rajiv Gandhi Selected Speeches and Writings* (hereafter *RGSW*), vol. 1, 1984–5 (New Delhi: Publications Division, Government of India, 1990), 9.
2. Entry of 12 June 1985, Brinkley (2007: 334).
3. Record of conversation between Ronald Reagan and Rajiv Gandhi, 12 June 1985, National Security Archive (NSA), Washington, DC.
4. Speech at state banquet, 12 June 1985, *RGSW* 1: 328–9.
5. Conversation between Mikhail Gorbachev and Rajiv Gandhi, 3 July 1987, Russian and Eastern European Archival Database (REEAD), NSA.
6. Conversation between Mikhail Gorbachev and Najibullah, 20 July 1987, REEAD, NSA.
7. Conversation between Mikhail Gorbachev and K. C. Pant, 11 February 1988, READD, NSA.
8. Speech on 28 January 1985, *RGSW* 1: 284.
9. Speech on 2 April 1986, *RGSW* 2: 232.
10. Statement in Lok Sabha, 3 March 1987, *RGSW* 3: 361.
11. Speech at banquet hosted by President Gayoom, 7 February 1986, *RGSW* 2: 225.
12. Conversation between Mikhail Gorbachev and Rajiv Gandhi, 3 July 1987, REEAD, NSA.
13. Conversation between Mikhail Gorbachev and Rajiv Gandhi, 3 July 1987, REEAD, NSA.
14. Conversation between Mikhail Gorbachev and Rajiv Gandhi, 3 July 1987, REEAD, NSA.

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CHAPTER 10

FOREIGN POLICY AFTER 1990

Transformation through Incremental Adaptation

C. RAJA MOHAN

Introduction

The scale and scope of the changes in India's foreign policy since the end of the Cold War have been truly impressive. Yet, there has been little conscious articulation of the logic and purpose of India's changing new foreign policy orientation either by the political class in power or the permanent bureaucracy. This is due, in part, to Delhi's strategy of incremental adjustment rather than revolutionary transformation. Unlike Deng Xiaoping who defined a set of national and international objectives and strategies for China in the post-Mao era, the Indian leadership at the turn of the 1990s could not and did not disown the inherited political legacy. It moved with great caution and much aversion to any significant risk. India's improved economic performance and the international expectations of commercial opportunities in a globalizing India provided Delhi the much-needed incentive, time, and space to reconstruct its foreign policy after the Cold War.

Despite much uncertainty in domestic politics, differences in ideology, strategy, and tactics of adapting to changed circumstances at home and abroad, and variations in the diplomatic style of successive governments, India's foreign policy evolved in a relatively stable manner under several prime ministers heading different coalitions in Delhi since 1989. These slow and incremental changes over a quarter of a century reveal an unmistakable transformation of Indian foreign policy. Many of the innovations in India's foreign policy in this period, it must be noted, were initiated in the 1980s as Prime Ministers Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi sought to ease the many rigidities that had accumulated in India's foreign policy. New outreach to the United States and China, the attempt to normalize relations with Pakistan, and the engagement with Israel, to

name a few, preceded 1990. So did the first steps towards economic liberalization and the demonstration of India's potential as a regional power taken in the 1980s. Although India conducted nuclear tests and declared itself a nuclear weapons power in 1998, Rajiv Gandhi had ordered the building of the bomb in 1988 (Subrahmanyam 1998).

Rajiv Gandhi's successors were under much greater pressure to initiate a root-and-branch overhaul of India's foreign policy. The end of the Cold War had dramatically altered the external environment demanding that India examine all the core assumptions of its foreign policy. But unlike Rajiv and Indira Gandhi, the prime ministers who followed them did not command massive parliamentary majorities. All of them had to work within coalition governments. India's severe balance of payments crisis at the turn of the 1990s, coinciding with the fall of the Berlin Wall, demanded significant policy change on both economic and foreign policy fronts. The 1990s also saw profound disturbances in India's frontier states—Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir, and the North East. The heartland was in tumult as caste and religion emerged as major sources of conflict. Addressing any one of these was difficult enough, but Delhi had to cope with all these challenges—economic, political, and national security—simultaneously and in retrospect did so reasonably well.

This chapter focuses on three themes in India's foreign policy evolution since 1990—re-engagement with the major powers after the Cold War, rediscovery of the extended neighbourhood in Asia, Africa and the Indian Ocean, and an attempted redefinition of its ties to immediate neighbours in the subcontinent. It concludes with a brief discussion of the enduring debate in India on the concepts of non-alignment and strategic autonomy.

Re-engaging Great Powers

As India's familiar international universe collapsed along with the Soviet Union in 1991, repairing relations with the West, especially the United States, became one of the urgent priorities for Delhi. Three important factors facilitated the new engagement with the West. Thanks to Rajiv and Indira Gandhi, some difficult ground had already been cleared in the 1980s. India's economic reforms opened the space for India's commercial engagement with the West that had shrunk so significantly during the era of state-led socialism. Finally, the disappearance of the Soviet Union freed India to reinvent its major power relationships. While seeking better ties with the West, Japan, and China, Delhi refused to abandon post-Soviet Russia. Delhi held on to the relationship despite Moscow's new focus on the West, insisted on a new treaty of friendship to replace the 1971 pact, offered generous financial terms on phasing out the rupee–rouble trade, and sustained defence cooperation amidst the disruptions created by the economic turbulence and the break-up of the Soviet Union (Pant 2013).

If India was eager to deepen ties with the West, it was also rather wary of the unipolar world dominated by America. Delhi faced a number of obstacles in deepening ties with the United States and the West. Many in the developed world were deeply sceptical of India's ability to undertake structural reforms to realize its full economic potential.

The absence of a great power challenger to the United States meant there was no geopolitical rationale in Washington to warm up to Delhi—in the manner that the West drew close to Deng Xiaoping at the height of the Cold War. On the ideological front, India's democracy was a valuable virtue at a time when the West was celebrating its victory over communism; but it was not enough to bind India to the West. A new international agenda centred on the humanitarian imperative in the West focused attention on some of the problems bedevilling Indian democracy—from human rights violations in Kashmir to child labour—and was deeply disturbing to the Indian political elite so proud of its democracy and concerned about territorial sovereignty. Finally the growing Western focus on preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction after the American liberation of Kuwait from Iraqi occupation (1990–1) ran headlong into India's traditional policy of keeping its nuclear weapons option open and the refusal to accept any constraints on its atomic energy and missile programmes. This was not a problem just with the West, but with Russia and China as well (Paul 1998). When India conducted five nuclear tests in May 1998, the United Nations Security Council unanimously passed resolution number 1172 demanding that India and Pakistan (which conducted six tests of its own at the end of May 1998) roll back their nuclear and missile programmes. Although the resolution was adopted under Chapter 6 and not the mandatory terms of Chapter 7 of the UN charter, India's nuclear isolation seemed absolute.

Nevertheless, India's nuclear tests provided a basis for an intensive engagement with the United States and an opportunity to resolve the extended disputes with Washington on non-proliferation issues that began with the emergence of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1970 and the negative international response to India's 'peaceful' nuclear test in 1974 (Talbott 2004). India successfully accomplished this objective by 2008, thanks to a fundamental change in the US approach to India's nuclear weapons programme under the administration of George W. Bush. In a bold initiative with Bush in July 2005, Singh agreed to separate India's civil and military nuclear programmes, bring a significant portion of its civil programme under international safeguards, and actively support the global non-proliferation regime. In return, Bush agreed to carve out a nuclear exception for India within US law and the international conditions for atomic commerce. Bush had to expend much political capital convincing sceptics at home and abroad on the importance of modifying the non-proliferation regime in favour of India during 2005–8 (Mohan 2006; Chari 2009).

India's engagement with Bush not only helped India end its prolonged nuclear isolation. It also facilitated the de-hyphenation of US relations with India and Pakistan. For Bush was willing to locate India in the great power framework rather than view Delhi through the distorting prism of Pakistan. If Clinton focused on reducing the dangers of a 'nuclear flashpoint' in Kashmir between India and Pakistan, Bush emphasized India's importance to the world as a large democracy, and its potential contribution to a stable balance of power in Asia amidst the rise of China (Tellis 2008). As part of his conviction that America must assist India's emergence as a great power, Bush was also willing to remain neutral in India's disputes with Pakistan and defer to Delhi's leadership elsewhere in the subcontinent and strongly back India's role in East Asia and the Pacific.

Although not everyone in the Democratic Party's foreign policy establishment was convinced of the Bush logic, Obama largely walked along the path cleared by his predecessor, although with a lot less fervour towards India. The political drift in India during the second term of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government saw the relationship plateau out after Obama's visit to India at the end of 2010. Although there were multiple disappointments on both sides on the pace of progress in bilateral relations, India's relationship with the United States has never been as broad and as deep since independence.

The new growth in ties with the United States facilitated stronger cooperation with US allies in Europe and Asia. But it also complicated India's relations with China as Beijing began to contemplate the strategic logic behind the American outreach to India in the Bush years. Since Rajiv Gandhi's visit to China 1988, there had been a steady improvement of their important but brittle relationship. The disputed boundary remained peaceful and the two sides agreed for the first time in 2005 on a set of guiding principles to settle the territorial dispute. On the economic front, China emerged as the largest trading partner in goods with India. This happy trend of improved relations began to break down by the latter part of the 2000s, amidst greater friction on the border, Beijing's hardening stance in the boundary negotiations, the widening trade deficit in China's favour, and Beijing's rising profile in the subcontinent and the Indian Ocean (Garver 2000; Smith 2014).

During the Cold War, India's foreign policy was designed to cope with the dangers of confrontation and occasional collusion between America and Russia. Two and a half decades later, India now finds itself unsettled by the emerging dynamic in the relations between Washington and Beijing. Delhi has no desire to see a revival of the Cold War between America and a rising China; it is equally apprehensive of a potential Sino-American condominium in Asia. India's past navigation of great power relations might not necessarily be a good guide to its future policy, for Delhi's own weight in the regional and international system has grown. The substantive expansion of its economy since 1990 has produced a solid if still modest commercial relationship with all the major powers. Its political and security cooperation with the United States has acquired much traction. Yet, India's strategy of engagement of all powers is coming under some stress thanks to a number of factors. These include the rapid rise of Beijing, the widening strategic gap between Delhi and Beijing, the unfolding uncertainty in US–China relations, and the breakdown of the post-Cold War understandings between Washington and Moscow. While India no longer has the luxury of unhindered engagement with all the great powers, its potential role as a 'swing state' that could shape the regional and global balances gives it a kind of leverage that it did not enjoy in the past.

Reclaiming the Extended Neighbourhood

After India's initial enthusiasm for Asian unity and Afro-Asian solidarity, the depth and breadth of Delhi's relationships in the critical regions abutting the subcontinent steadily

diminished during the Cold War era. India's emphasis on the non-aligned movement (NAM) gave its foreign policy the illusions of international leadership but was accompanied by the hollowing out of its regional primacy established in a century and a half of British rule in the subcontinent. By the end of the Cold War, India's once robust commercial links with Africa, the Middle East, and South-East Asia had frayed significantly thanks to India's policies of import substitution and economic self-reliance. Its political interaction with the leaders of the neighbouring regions was increasingly limited to NAM and G-77 meetings. Although India's leadership on countering apartheid in Africa had won it much good will in the continent, its ties had little economic content (in spite of the long-standing presence of Indian trading communities along much of Africa's coastline and the presence of a large Indian diaspora in South Africa). India's engagement with the Middle East, defined in terms of anti-imperial solidarity, began to face great stress as the regional contradictions started to unfold as in the Iran–Iraq War and Saddam Hussein's occupation of Kuwait. In the East, economic marginalization was accompanied by India's identification with the Soviet Union on regional security issues. Delhi paid a high price for supporting Vietnamese intervention to save Cambodia from the genocide perpetrated by the Khmer Rouge that enjoyed support in China.

The end of the Cold War and the launch of economic reforms gave India the opportunity to recast its regional relations. The new logic of economic globalization meant India learning the grammar of regionalism in Asia. As India reformed its economy, it first turned to the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) as a benchmark for its own liberalization and sought to initiate engagement with the regional grouping. This was reflected in the Look East policy articulated by Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao in 1992, which eventually turned out to be one of the most successful Indian diplomatic initiatives after the Cold War. After the breakdown of the Soviet Union, Rao also quickly established diplomatic ties with all the new republics in Central Asia. In the early 1990s, Rao also took an important decision to change a long-standing policy towards another vital region—the Middle East. After much internal consultation, Rao decided to establish full diplomatic relations with Israel, bringing to a close the Indian policy of limiting its engagement with Tel Aviv in presumed solidarity with the Arab nations. The peace process in the Middle East and the relaxation of tensions between Israel and the Arab states made Rao's decision easier (Dixit 1996). Rao's tenure also saw the first fresh look at regional cooperation with Africa and the founding of the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC). By the turn of the millennium, all of the subcontinent's adjoining regions acquired a new prominence for India's foreign policy.

Under Vajpayee and Singh, India's engagement with the extended neighbourhood widened and deepened. As the size and character of the Indian economy changed, commercial links with all the neighbouring regions grew rapidly. As its trade with East Asia overtook that with America and Europe, India signed Comprehensive Economic Partnerships with Singapore, South Korea, and Japan. It also signed a free trade agreement with ASEAN as a whole and is part of the negotiations on a broader trade liberalization agreement called the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership. Signing these free trade agreements, despite their limited and shallow nature, was not easy, given the difficult domestic dynamic. As in trade politics around the world, significant

constituencies in the country were opposed to trade liberalization. Sections of the Congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party too were wary of free trade for ideological reasons. Both Vajpayee and Singh had to expend much political capital in winning domestic support for trade integration with East Asia. In the West, the free trade talks with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) made little progress, but the Gulf began to acquire much greater salience for India's foreign policy. India's growing hunger for energy imports and growing exports to the Gulf made the GCC one of India's top trading partners. Further afield, African economies boomed in the new millennium, which raised the continent's share in India's international trade and encouraged India to intensify political and diplomatic engagement with Africa. India began to rediscover its extended neighbourhood in the post-reform phase with its Look East policy. It soon followed up with a 'Look West Asia' policy, a 'Connect Central Asia' policy, and a more dynamic engagement with Africa and the Indian Ocean littoral (Wadhwa 2014).

The emergence of Asia, Africa, and the Middle East as major destinations for India's exports and sources of vital raw materials had significant strategic consequences. First, as India recognized its deepening interdependence with the extended neighbourhood, restoring historic physical connectivity and building new trans-border transport and energy corridors—to the Persian Gulf, Central Asia, and South-East Asia—became an important priority for Delhi. Second, India devoted considerable diplomatic energies to participation in the new regional institutions that had sprung up in its extended neighbourhood. For a country that was once contemptuous of regionalism, India has spent much energy since the early 1990s on becoming a full participant in the regional institutions led by ASEAN. In Central Asia, it had won observer status in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. In the West, India has begun to convene regular summit meetings with African leaders on a biennial basis since 2008. India also took the initiative in 2011 to revive the moribund IOR-ARC and give it a new lease of life. Third, as China's economic profile began to rise in the Indian Ocean littoral, Delhi began to revamp and intensify its own outreach in the region. This involved significantly raising India's economic assistance delivered to countries ranging from Cambodia in the East to Senegal in the West and the setting up of a Development Partnership Administration to bring greater purposefulness to its regional economic diplomacy (Chaturvedi 2013).

Finally, the unfolding competition with China was not limited to the economic domain, but involved the realm of security as well. Partly driven by demand and partly from the supply side, there has been significant expansion of what we may call 'military diplomacy' on India's part. India signed a range of defence cooperation agreements all across the extended neighbourhood and set the stage for high level military exchanges, naval manoeuvres, defence dialogues among the civilian establishments, military training, and supply of arms and non-lethal equipment. India, which consciously shunned the legacy of the British Raj in the first decades after independence, is now rediscovering the virtues and vices of becoming a regional security provider. Not surprisingly the idea that India's security interests stretch from 'Aden to Malacca' inherited from the Raj gained a fresh lease of life in the years of Vajpayee and Singh who began to create capabilities for the projection of India's military power and deepening security cooperation

all across the extended neighbourhood (Scott 2009; Wadhwa 2014). The idea of India as a 'net security provider in the Indian Ocean and beyond' began to gain considerable ground both within Delhi and other capitals. As relative tranquillity after the Cold War to the East and West of the subcontinent comes to an end, there is growing demand on India to take a larger role in stabilizing its extended neighbourhood and contribute to the maintenance of the regional order. In developing a credible and sustainable framework for a larger regional security role, India might have to look beyond non-alignment and Third World solidarity and reclaim in some measure the kind of role that the Raj played in the vast Indian Ocean littoral (Metcalf 2007).

Securing South Asian Primacy

While the extended neighbourhood was open to India's new regional role, Delhi's challenges in the subcontinent were far more demanding at the turn of the 1990s. The 1980s had demonstrated the difficulties of ensuring India's much-vaunted primacy in the region. The military intervention in the Sri Lanka launched in 1987 was brought to a close in 1990 with no one in Colombo, Jaffna, Chennai, and Delhi ready to thank the Indian armed forces for the difficult task they performed in Sri Lanka. Rajiv Gandhi's pressure tactics on Nepal created deep resentment in the Kathmandu elite, and in Bangladesh there were few friends speaking up for India. Pakistan's army, triumphal after helping America oust the Soviet troops from Afghanistan and acquiring nuclear weapons with Chinese help, turned the new instrument of jihad against Indian Kashmir. As India faced one of the worst moments after independence, its foreign policy evolved to cope with the new and extreme challenges in the subcontinent (Dixit 2001).

Delhi recognized that stabilizing the relationship with Pakistan was an absolute necessity, and resisted frequent calls for a confrontation with Pakistan from sections of the strategic community and the media. Despite unending provocations from Pakistan's army, in the form of cross-border terrorism, Delhi sustained the engagement with Pakistan. This approach helped India manage the nuclear transition in the subcontinent, limit the war to reverse Pakistani aggression across the Line of Control in the Kargil sector, persuade Islamabad to occasionally order a pause in support to cross-border terrorism, expand economic interaction with Pakistan, institute a set of military and civilian confidence-building measures, including in Kashmir, and fend off the temptations in the West to intervene in Kashmir. The Indian leadership also explored and came close to clinching settlements to long-standing bilateral disputes, like Siachen and Sir Creek. Above all, Vajpayee began and Singh continued a back channel negotiation with Pakistan on resolving the Kashmir question (Coll 2009). With the settlement of major issues remaining and the prospect for normalization of bilateral relations receding, some have speculated on the India–Pakistan conflict lasting for a century and beyond (Cohen 2013). A more optimistic perspective, however, might argue that the two sides

have traversed the terrain of possible settlements, the knowledge of which might come in handy to strong leaders in both countries ready to move forward.

If India had trouble making up with Pakistan, its engagement with the smaller neighbours turned out to be lot more productive. While Rao sought to calm things down after the muscle-flexing by Rajiv Gandhi, Gujral articulated a new framework for India's regional policy that would replace what was often called the 'Indira Doctrine'. Mrs Gandhi was only affirming India's primacy in the subcontinent—a tradition that goes back to the British Raj (Embree 1989). If the Partition and the Cold War limited India's influence in the subcontinent, Gujral had seen the diminution of India's power vis-à-vis the smaller neighbours and growing ire among the neighbouring elites against Delhi. Gujral outlined a doctrine that discarded the old emphases on bilateralism and reciprocity, underlining India's willingness to walk more than half way to resolve the existing bilateral disputes with the neighbours. He acknowledged that as the largest power in the region, India had to take greater responsibility for promoting peace and prosperity in the subcontinent. All he sought in return for a generous approach to the neighbours was that they not allow their territories to serve as springboards for hostile activities against India. The Gujral Doctrine generated much approbation in the region and in the West—but there was much criticism in India, especially on the right, that it was all about appeasing the recalcitrant neighbours. However, Gujral's stint in power was too short and his hold on power too tenuous to deliver much to the neighbours.

His successor, Vajpayee, despite heading a party that advocated a muscular regional policy, in practice took no issue with Gujral. In fact, as Foreign Minister during 1977–9, under Prime Minister Morarji Desai, Vajpayee had put special emphasis on good neighbourly policy. Vajpayee's commitment to regional peace was not driven by idealism. His foreign policy ministers and advisers, Jaswant Singh, Yashwant Sinha, and Brajesh Mishra, understood that a peaceful neighbourhood was critical to achieving a larger Indian role in the world. On the economic front, Vajpayee signed a bilateral free trade agreement with Sri Lanka and concluded the South Asian Free Trade Agreement some months before he left office in 2004. But it was under Manmohan Singh that the Gujral Doctrine came into its own. As India's economic conditions significantly improved, Singh extended Gujral's generous approach to the realm of trade. Singh offered unilateral tariff reductions for the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) neighbours and underlined the importance of connectivity and promoted trade facilitation. While South Asia remains poorly connected within itself and remains the least integrated region in the world, the last quarter of a century has seen a steady expansion of regional economic cooperation although it is way below potential (Menon 2012).

On the political front too, India's vision of the immediate neighbourhood began to extend beyond the formal membership of the SAARC. As developments in Afghanistan from the late 1970s began to shape the security dynamic in the subcontinent, Delhi had to pay more attention to Kabul. India successfully campaigned for Afghan membership in SAARC, which was approved in 2005. In the East, neighbouring Burma acquired a new importance for India and Delhi's bilateral as well as multilateral engagement with

it intensified through such newly created institutions as the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation. And as China developed its western regions, its provinces of Xinjiang, Tibet, and Yunnan began to re-emerge in India's discourse on regionalism.

If India seemed quite willing to project itself forcefully within its neighbourhood in the 1980s, by the 1990s it had now come to terms with the limits to its regional power. After the failure of its military intervention in Sri Lanka and the shrinking benefits from an assertive policy, Delhi learnt that its primacy in the region cannot be enforced by mere diktat and that it would have to comprehensively recast its policies. India renegotiated in 2006 the 1949 treaty with Bhutan, replacing its unequal provisions. Vajpayee had also signalled India's willingness to review the 1950 treaty with Nepal; revising that treaty, however, would be far more complex than the one with Bhutan. While recasting the old hegemonic treaties, Delhi had developed a new template for strategic and economic cooperation with its neighbours. The strategic partnership agreement with Kabul, and framework agreements for strategic and economic cooperation with Bangladesh and Maldives—all signed in 2011—pointed to the unfolding restructuring of the treaty system that Nehru had inherited from the Raj (Mohan 2012).

India's regional diplomacy, however, continued to face a number of challenges, some of which have become more acute in recent years. One perennial issue has been the question of intervention in the internal affairs of the subcontinental neighbours. India might be a champion of 'non-intervention' on the global stage, but its record of interventions in the region is a long one. Its sense of primacy and high stakes in regional developments precluded India from adopting a non-interventionist approach in the region. At the same time, post-Sri Lanka, India had to evolve a more tempered approach. On the one hand, it continued to nudge its neighbouring countries to do what India thought was right and contributed its own bit to facilitate the positive evolution of regional conflicts. In Sri Lanka, it pressed Colombo to give the Tamil minority its due; in Nepal, it brought the Maoists and the political parties together and facilitated the transition from monarchy; in Bhutan, it strongly encouraged the democratic transition.

The construction of a carefully balanced policy towards the neighbours, however, was premised very much on Delhi's ability to limit the impact of its own domestic politics on the conduct of its foreign policy towards the neighbours. While strong leaders like Indira and Rajiv Gandhi, with massive parliamentary majorities, could handle these pressures with some ease, the coalition governments since the 1990s have found the task much harder. But no government has seemed as weak as the UPA-2 coalition (2009–14), which was ready to yield ground at the slightest sign of opposition. UPA-1 (2004–9), which had helped Colombo win the war against the Tamil Tigers during 2008–9, seemed unwilling to resist pressures from the important Indian state of Tamil Nadu during its second term (Destradi 2014). The greatest failing of UPA-2 was its inability to sign the agreements on Teesta water-sharing with Bangladesh and to secure parliamentary approval for the Land Boundary Agreement that it unveiled in 2011. Together the two had been intended to symbolize a dramatic transformation of Delhi's relations with Dhaka. The

domestic political calculations of the Congress leadership in West Bengal played a key role in Delhi squandering a historic moment with Dhaka.

Keeping the great powers out of the subcontinent has been an important geopolitical priority inherited from the British Raj. However, India was not very successful as the US–Soviet rivalry enveloped the region and India's own relative position weakened. India seethed with resentment against the US alliance with Pakistan from 1954 onward and was rather wary of the Anglo-American influence elsewhere in the region. However, the post-1990 years gave rise to some interesting changes. Delhi did not allow the renewed US–Pakistan ties after 9/11 to get in the way of improved ties with Washington. Delhi was supportive of US intervention in Afghanistan and saw it as a plus in the fight against terrorism based in Pakistan. While its hopes were not realized on the latter score, and India remained deeply worried about the manner in which the United States would end its intervention in Afghanistan, Delhi's concerns have increasingly focused on the rapid expansion of the Chinese presence in the subcontinent (Padukone 2014). China's engagement with the rest of India's neighbours has grown. Delhi recognizes that it cannot build a great wall against Beijing's economic influence in South Asia at a moment when India is seeking greater economic collaboration with China. At the same time, India is unlikely to give up its effort to limit China's future military presence in the region. China's mounting regional challenge could emerge as the greatest spur for India in making its South Asian policies more dynamic and effective.

Rethinking Non-Alignment

Despite substantive changes in India's foreign policy—towards the major powers, extended neighbourhood, and the subcontinent—some core ideas seem to have endured over the last quarter of a century. The idea of non-alignment and its more recent variant, 'strategic autonomy', continue to hold considerable salience in the Indian foreign policy discourse. The idea of non-alignment over the decades has acquired a variety of meanings, not all of them originally envisaged by the founding fathers of India's foreign policy. Non-alignment arose in the context of the Cold War rivalry that was unfolding as India became independent in the middle of the last century. In his first address on foreign policy on 7 September 1946 after taking over as the vice chairman of the Viceroy's Council, Jawaharlal Nehru affirmed that India would not join either of the competing blocs and declared that India would work for the creation of a 'world commonwealth and for free cooperation among free peoples' (Nehru 1961). While Nehru took positions on international issues that clashed with both of the superpowers, he presided over expansive engagement with all the major powers. It was after Nehru that the concept of non-alignment acquired a decisively anti-Western orientation. As India improved its relations with the United States and the West over the last 25 years, the argument that India was abandoning its non-aligned moorings was common among foreign policy traditionalists and left liberal intelligentsia. From a different perspective

though it can be argued that India's relationship with the great powers today is similar to that of the 1950s, when India engaged widely but avoided aligning with any power. But the scale and scope of India's international dialogue and cooperation is far more intensive in the early twenty-first century.

As China rises and its relations with the United States enter an uncertain phase, the question of India's attitude towards a potential rivalry or collaboration between the two has become an important challenge for India's foreign policy (Centre for Policy Research 2012). India's strategy to cope with the dynamic between the United States and China must necessarily be very different from the one between America and the Soviet Union that India dealt with in the Cold War. That China is the second largest economy of the world and a neighbour whose power potential is growing at a rapid pace makes it difficult to envisage a policy of formal or de facto neutrality or equidistance. As in 1962, India's commitment to non-alignment, even a rhetorical one, is likely to be severely tested by a military confrontation between China and any of several possible opponents, including, of course, India itself. As the strategic gap between India and China widens in favour of the latter, any strategy of balancing China would involve substantive security cooperation with the United States, Japan, and the West. Defining the boundary conditions for such cooperation to avoid either becoming a junior partner to Washington or being dragged into a direct confrontation with Beijing has emerged as a major task for Delhi's political and foreign policy elites.

Envoi: Some Future Policy Challenges

In his 1946 address, Nehru also underlined India's commitment to promoting decolonization and combating racialism. Even as he led the charge on these issues, Nehru did not allow himself to become anti-Western in any fundamental sense. Nehru was not willing to yield to leaders like Sukarno demanding a prolonged confrontation between the 'new emerging forces' and the West. He was also opposed to conceiving of the non-aligned movement as a third bloc. At the first and only non-aligned summit in 1961 that he participated in, Nehru emphasized the importance of global peace and nuclear arms control rather than confrontation with the West. Yet, the non-aligned movement became radical in the 1970s and embarked on grandiose projects of transforming the global order dominated by the West. By the turn of the 1990s, of course, the project of a new international economic order had collapsed and India, like many other developed countries, had to adapt to the 'Washington Consensus'. While India was a hesitant reformer, it had begun to benefit immensely from globalization. Nevertheless, managing the tensions with the international economic system on the pace and direction of India's reforms became a central challenge for Delhi. Beyond the trade and economic, new issues like climate change began to test Delhi's statecraft. The government has made attempts to navigate between domestic resistance to change and the external pressures for adaptation of policies on climate change.

Equally significant have been India's problems with the expansive new humanitarian agenda that the US and Western governments adopted—from international intervention to protect populations against their regimes to preventing human trafficking and from promotion of democracy and human rights to enforcing labour standards. India's initial reaction to the new agenda was a defensive one, fearing that any attempt to undermine state sovereignty would severely complicate India's unfinished task of nation-building at home. Over the last quarter of a century India has adapted in multiple ways. Thanks to external pressures, Indian democracy began to pay greater attention to human rights issues at home. Whether it was the establishment of the National Human Rights Commission in 1993 or the encouragement of the armed forces to adapt their counter-insurgency tactics, India's practice moved beyond the sterile emphasis on defending India's sovereignty against Western pressures. On democracy promotion too, India has found a balance of its own, ready to share its experiences with other states but refusing to support its forcible imposition on others. If Vajpayee got India to join the Community of Democracy initiatives in 2000, Singh extended strong support to the Bush initiative to build a democracy fund at the United Nations. In reaffirming India's identity as the world's largest democracy, Vajpayee and Singh were breaking from post-Nehruvian Third Worldism.

Finally, over the last quarter of a century, the concept of 'strategic autonomy' has largely replaced 'non-alignment' as the moniker of India's foreign policy. A closer look at the concept, however, reveals some difficulties. 'Strategic autonomy' is often presented as a uniquely Indian attribute of foreign policy; yet it is not very different from the proposition that all states seek to maximize their 'autonomy' in the international system to the extent that they can. Large states after all have greater resources and political ambitions with which to pursue strategic autonomy than do small and weak states. India's economic weight in the international system has grown significantly between 1990 and 2014 and as a result its foreign policy has much greater room for manoeuvre in the early twenty-first century than the middle of the twentieth when the concept of non-alignment was invented. Delhi's obsessive focus on 'strategic autonomy', then, can only be explained by the huge lag between India's growing power resources and potential on the one hand and the inertia of its strategic discourse on the other.

Two structural changes are bound to contribute to how India sees itself and its place in the world in the coming years. First, despite the slowdown of the Indian economy since the late 2000s, India is on its way to becoming a major power itself. Many of India's policies were designed to cope with its relative weakness in the international system. Delhi must eventually come to terms with its emerging strengths. The second is the huge change in the nature of India's economy after two and a half decades of accelerated growth. Nearly 50 per cent of its economy is now linked to international trade, including both imports and exports. The Indian economy is thus a very different beast in the early twenty-first century than what is was at the turn of the 1990s. 'Strategic autonomy' was the flip side of the economic autarky that India pursued in the Cold War. India now needs a very different policy to deal with the logic and reality of its critical economic interdependence with the rest of the world (Kumar 2010). The main task of India's

foreign policy can no longer centre on preventing the rest of the world from impinging on it. It must focus instead on shaping its regional environment, influencing the global order, and thus proactively creating conditions for India's sustained growth and prosperity. This new external task can be summed up as the 'quest for strategic influence'.

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CHAPTER 11

INDIA'S NATIONAL SECURITY

SUMIT GANGULY

The Legacies of Colonialism and Partition

India's emergence in the global order was part of the early wave of the European decolonization process. It came about both as a consequence of the growth of the Indian nationalist movement as well as the inability of the United Kingdom to sustain colonial rule in the wake of its exhaustion as a consequence of the ravages of the Second World War. The country also became independent at a time when the fleeting and exigent cooperation between the United States and the Soviet Union during the Second World War came to a close and the international order witnessed the beginning of the Cold War. As early as July 1947, a month before India's independence, the noted American diplomat George Kennan had pseudonymously published his famous article, 'The Sources of Soviet Conduct', a document that would soon become the intellectual basis of the US strategy of containment directed against possible Soviet expansionism.

Deft Pakistani diplomacy designed solely to balance India's greater capabilities, and a perceived threat, helped focus American attention on the region. The forging of the US–Pakistan alliance in 1954 was to have significant adverse consequences for India's national security and would also contribute to the estrangement of the two countries (McMahon 1996).

It is important to underscore this politico-strategic backdrop because it had a significant impact on the evolution of India's security policies. The United States, focused on possible Soviet designs on Western Europe and East Asia, paid scant attention to India. The Soviets, still under Stalin's grip, saw India through the lens of a doctrinaire ideology, and thereby attached little significance to the country in their strategic calculations (Donaldson 1974). Indeed, it was not until his demise that his successors shifted their perspective on India's position in the Cold War international order.

At a national level, it is virtually impossible to discuss the genesis of India's security policies without taking into account the role of the British colonial heritage and the impact of the Partition of India. Furthermore, as recent scholarship has revealed, British hostility toward India had important and deleterious consequences for India especially because of British machinations in favor of Pakistan on the vexed question of the status of the Princely State of Jammu and Kashmir (Dasgupta 2002).

Finally, and as many commentators have discussed at length, few individuals had as much of an impact on the shaping of post-independence India's foreign and security policies as its first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. In the absence of a significant cohort of individuals in the Indian Cabinet who had substantial knowledge of and experience with international affairs, Nehru swiftly emerged as *primus inter pares*. Consequently, his imprint on India's foreign and security policies was considerable from the very outset.

Contrary to some recent assessments, Nehru's vision of global order, enshrined in the adoption of a policy of non-alignment, was not merely a deft, instrumental strategy. Instead it reflected his deep-seated beliefs about global order. Indeed, a perusal of his writings on international politics supports such a conclusion (Nehru 2011). Nehru, who pursued an ideational foreign policy, had visions of fundamentally transforming the global order. Such an order would promote decolonization and self-determination, hobble the use of force in international politics, boost universal nuclear disarmament, and reduce global inequalities.

The Persistence of Key Security Challenges

External Threats

It is intriguing to note that the key national security challenges that India confronted after independence, though not identical, have remained somewhat constant. Three such subjects merit discussion: two of them are external and one domestic. The external threats emanate from Pakistan and the People's Republic of China (PRC). The internal threat, which has metamorphosed over the decades through multiple manifestations, involves both ethnic and class differences that pose a challenge to India's national integrity and cohesion.

The most immediate national security threats that it faced emanated from Pakistan, which advanced an irredentist claim to the state of Jammu and Kashmir (Ganguly 2001). After three wars (1947–8, 1965, and 1999) and multiple crises, Pakistan is no closer toward the realization of its goal. Nevertheless, it has far from abandoned its claim to the state and has, at least since the 1980s, resorted to an asymmetric war strategy to raise for India the costs of keeping the portion of the state that it currently controls (Swami

2006). Furthermore, Pakistan's overt acquisition of nuclear weapons shortly after India's decision to cross that Rubicon may have effectively limited the prospects of full-scale war (Ganguly 2008). However, it may have also created conducive conditions for the pursuit of limited incursions in non-vital regions to test India's resolve and capabilities. In considerable measure, the Kargil War of 1999 may be deemed to be such a 'limited probe' (George and Smoke 1974).

Despite multiple attempts to engage Pakistan in the wake of the Kargil War, even after two subsequent crises in 2001–2 and then again in 2008, little progress has been made toward reaching any rapprochement. Indeed, in 2013 clashes ensued once again along the Line of Control (LoC), the de facto international border, in Kashmir (Bedi 2013d).

A second source of threat, that from the People's Republic of China was perhaps not as immediately apparent in the immediate post-independence era. Furthermore, Prime Minister Nehru had sought to fashion a policy of appeasement to try and avoid a conflict with Indian's northern colossus.[1] Though neither leader was willing to militarily confront the PRC, the lack of Indian military preparedness proved quite disastrous when the PRC launched an attack on India's Himalayan borders in 1962 (Palit 1992). Shortly thereafter, the PRC moved to forge a closer strategic relationship with Pakistan. In many ways this was cemented when Pakistan conceded a section of the disputed state of Jammu and Kashmir to the PRC in 1963 (Garver 2001). Furthermore, the PRC acquisition of nuclear weapons in 1964 spurred India to pursue a nuclear option as early as 1966 under the aegis of the Subterranean Nuclear Explosions Project (Ganguly 2010).

Despite multiple efforts under various regimes in New Delhi to settle the border dispute, the progress on this front has been glacial. Also, apart from the closeness of the Sino-Pakistani relationship and the PRC's involvement in and support for the Pakistani nuclear weapons program, Sino-Indian relations remain fraught. Three issues, in particular, continue to dog the relationship. The first, of course, involves the unresolved border dispute and the PRC's willingness to periodically shift its stance on its territorial claims and resort to probes along the disputed border. The second stems from the presence and activities of the Dalai Lama, the spiritual and temporal leader of the Tibetan exile community in India. Finally, the PRC remains unreconciled to India's status as a nuclear weapons state. This was evident from its hostility toward granting India an exemption from the rules of the Nuclear Suppliers Group when the US–India civilian nuclear agreement was about to be consummated in 2008.

Internal Threats

The final national security threat that India confronts stems from within. In the wake of independence, its policy-makers were faced with the daunting task of national integration. The nascent government handled this task with remarkable ease and with a minimum use of force (Menon 1955).[2] Subsequently, it faced rebellions in India's northeast but proved able to contain if not wholly suppress them through an amalgam of force and limited concessions. Later, in considerable part thanks to the shortcomings of its

own federal structure as well as dubious choices on the part of its policy-makers, most notably Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, the country saw the rise of an ethnic, secessionist insurgency in the Punjab (Telford 1992). Later, after a long period of uninterrupted peace, an insurrection also erupted in the Indian-controlled segment of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The origins of this uprising could also be traced to domestic sources. However, within months of its outbreak Pakistan's security establishment chose to enter the fray turning an internal conflict into a externally supported, religiously charged extortion racket (Ganguly 1997).

The Indian state managed to crush the Punjab insurgency using a rather harsh counter-insurgency strategy. It has also managed to restore a modicum of order if not the rule of law in Kashmir (Ganguly and Fidler 2013). Though the underlying grievances were not, for the most part, addressed in the Punjab, a likely recrudescence of the insurgency there is unlikely. In Kashmir, however, the Indian state still faces a deep reservoir of discontent and also cannot escape the possibilities of continued Pakistani interference.

Finally, two sources of domestic violence now dog India. First, the country has seen the renewal of Maoist violence across a significant swath of the country and the emergence of domestic Islamist terror in particular parts thereof. The roots of this Maoist revival are complex and beyond the scope of this chapter (Lalwani 2011). Suffice it to say that it stems from a congeries of factors including the poor quality of governance in various parts of the country, expanding economic disparities, and the mobilization of extant grievances. How the Indian state chooses to respond to this resurgence of Maoist activity will, in considerable measure, determine its future. Thus far, its responses have been piecemeal, sporadic, and, in large measure, uncoordinated. Of course, India's federal structure, to some degree, hobbles the possibility of fashioning a wholly coherent response.

Second, the emergence of domestic Islamist terror also poses a problem to India's political order. Once again, the specific origins of the genesis of Islamist violence in India are well beyond the scope of this analysis. There is some evidence, however, that it can be traced to persistent perceptions of discrimination amongst a younger generation of Indian Muslims, their increased political awareness, and also the possible impact of the pogrom that took place in Gujarat in February 2002. The most radical of these is the Indian mujahidin who have been deemed to be responsible for a number of terror attacks across the country (Ahuja 2013).

The challenge that this form of radical Islamist violence poses to the Indian polity cannot be understated. If allowed to fester, it could have significant adverse consequences for the body politic. It might enable external powers, most notably Pakistan, to continue to exacerbate existing social fissures. Furthermore, even in the absence of foreign involvement and interference, the persistence of such rents in the social fabric of a poly-ethnic state are inherently undesirable as it constitutes a fundamental basis for social unrest.

A strategy that simply seeks to repress these organizations and most notably the Indian mujahidin, is unlikely to succeed. Instead, any attempt to deal with these terrorist

groups must involve a two-pronged approach. At one level, this will obviously involve careful intelligence collection, prompt investigation of attacks, and swift prosecution of the perpetrators. At another, it will require the Indian state to also address underlying grievances that have led to this turn toward the resort to terror.

Capabilities and Their Limitations

Given these security challenges what are the extant military capabilities of the Indian state? How has it sought to deploy these assets to cope with the present threats? Finally, what are the principal constraints that it confronts in bringing its resources toward meeting these pressures? The coercive power of the Indian state is considerable and a far cry from the days when it lacked the ability to effectively deal with a range of external threats to its territorial integrity.

The current military capabilities of the Indian state are considerable. According to information in the public domain it has 870 combat aircraft, 21 surface combatant vessels, 15 submarine vessels, and over 3,000 main battle tanks. It also has 1,325,000 military personnel and almost an equal number of paramilitary forces (International Institute of Strategic Studies, 2013). Beyond these human and material capabilities, it also has a very substantial military industrial base. It has 39 ordnance factories, nine Defense Public Sector Undertakings, and a network of 52 high-technology research establishments under the aegis of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

However, despite the size of the military-industrial infrastructure, its actual performance has been quite uneven. As a number of scholars and analysts have highlighted, it has suffered from vast cost overruns, it has failed to meet stated targets on a number of occasions, and is not subject to careful, rigorous, dispassionate external scrutiny (Behera 2013). Consequently, despite a long-professed commitment to self-reliance in the arena of weapons acquisitions, the country remains acutely dependent on a range of foreign suppliers for a range of weaponry to equip its armed forces (Kumar 2012).

Among other matters, the country has long struggled to develop an indigenous Light Combat Aircraft. Indeed, it was three decades after the project was launched that it was finally flight tested in April 2013 (Menon 2013). Though touted as an indigenous aircraft, General Electric engines power both its versions (Bedi 2013c). Furthermore, its radar, weapons systems, and other key components are also of foreign origin. As of early 2013, the aircraft had yet to receive full operational clearance; a designation that means that it has received the requisite approval to carry weaponry. India's experience in developing a military transport aircraft, Saras, has not been salutary. Of the two test aircraft that were built, the second crashed in 2009 killing all three personnel on board. The efforts at indigenization once again have been far from exemplary as the engine is from Pratt and Whitney of Canada (Francis and Menon 2013).

The problems with this aircraft unfortunately are emblematic of what ails much of India's sprawling defense industrial sector. Indian strategic commentators routinely

exhort policy-makers to reduce the country's dependence on foreign suppliers of weaponry. A committee that an important player in India's defense science establishment and subsequent president, A. P. J. Kalam, had headed in the mid-1990s had called for reducing the foreign content of weaponry from 70 to 30 per cent by 2005. However, as of 2013, the figure remained at 70 per cent (M. Joshi 2013). In the foreseeable future, it is hard to envisage how India might be able to reduce its dependence on foreign suppliers given the persistent inability of its domestic military industrial base to meet extant needs on a timely and cost-effective basis.

Policies and Strategies

To cope with the threat from the PRC, India has deployed twelve mountain divisions along its Himalayan border. The threat to India is compelling and has been underscored as a consequence of a number of statements emanating from high-level sources as well as recent border incidents. India's strategy, as can be discerned from its border deployments, appears to be a combination of a strategy of deterrence through denial and punishment (Snyder 1961).

Along the Himalayan border, India's military deployments, its road improvement efforts, and its creation of a new military base equipped with Sukhoi-30 aircraft in Tezpur, Assam, all suggest that in terms of immediate deterrence of the PRC India's military planners have chosen a strategy of denial (Kashyap 2007). In June of 2013, India's Ministry of Finance gave the nod for the development of a mountain strike corps of around 90,000 troops which would be deployed along the disputed border with the PRC. This approval came in the wake of an incident in which the People's Liberation Army (PLA) had penetrated and set up camp 19 kilometers within the Line of Actual Control in mid-April of 2013. The PLA forces had withdrawn from the Dapsang Valley only after extensive diplomatic negotiations and a tense three-week standoff with the Indian army (Bedi 2013b). These preparations are under way despite New Delhi's unwillingness to ratchet up its public rhetoric when dealing with the PRC on the fraught question of the resolution of the border dispute.

In pursuit of a form of more general deterrence of the PRC, India is steadily investing in long-range missile capabilities that can strike significant portions of southern China. In fact, the Agni V missile that is currently under development should not only be able to target significant sections of the PRC but is apparently designed to carry multiple warheads (Keck 2013). This Indian deterrent capability is mostly designed to counter the PRC's substantial air capabilities in Tibet including five all-weather airfields. Also, according to a reliable source, the PRC apparently has an undisclosed number of Dong Feng-3 nuclear-capable ballistic missiles in Tibet which are targeted at India (Bedi 2013a).

Furthermore, the Sino-Indian competition is starting to extend well beyond the disputed border and spilling over into India's immediate neighborhood. Through a deft

amalgam of diplomatic initiatives, economic incentives, and security arrangements the PRC has made significant inroads into all of India's neighbors. These developments go well beyond the 'all weather' friendship that the PRC has long enjoyed with Pakistan (Sender 2013).

Additionally, a degree of naval competition, at least in incipient form, is now emerging in the Indian Ocean as the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) seeks to extend the reach of its capabilities. It is unlikely that this will abate any time in the foreseeable future. Instead, if the PLAN ramps up its activity and the PLA continues to exert pressure on India's land borders in the Himalayan region, there is every reason to believe that Indian naval planners will seek to broaden and deepen the scope of their current naval cooperation with Singapore, Vietnam, and Japan. These states, as well as various others in North-East and South-East Asia entertain significant and growing anxieties about the PLAN's assertiveness in the South China Sea and beyond. Furthermore, a number of them have important maritime boundary disputes with the PRC. Consequently, enhancing naval cooperation with India provides a useful hedge against the PLAN's ability and willingness to flex its capabilities in the region.

India's willingness to enter the fray reflects some ambivalence. Obviously, its policy-makers do not want to get drawn into a regional maritime conflict far from its shores. However, as prominent Indian commentators have argued, it is nevertheless willing to demonstrate that it has the requisite naval capabilities to reassure its new-found friends in South-East Asia (Mohan 2013).

In addition to these states, India has also sought to forge a viable diplomatic relationship with South Korea, a state that it had mostly neglected during much of the Cold War era. However, over the course of the past decade India has successfully managed to fashion a multi-faceted relationship with South Korea. Though neither side sees this relationship as a mechanism for containing the PRC, both have common interest in promoting bilateral trade and investment and, from a strategic standpoint, in keeping a close watch on the Pakistani–North Korean clandestine nuclear weapons network (Brewster 2010).

Though conducted without much fanfare, India has extended its naval reach into the South China Sea. According to analysts who have some familiarity with and knowledge of these Indian naval deployments, India's efforts stem from a combination of both geo-economic and geostrategic interests. Specifically, it appears that India's interest in operating in these waters stems from its quest for reliable energy resources especially off the coastal areas of Vietnam, to ensure safe and uninterrupted passage of its ships involved in seaborne trade, and to deny the PRC from asserting any unilateral sway over the region. These interests, from an Indian standpoint, neatly converge because as much as 55 per cent of India's trade takes place through the choke point of the Straits of Malacca and to and from the region of the South China Sea (Scott 2013).

Over the past decade India has sought to engage Pakistan despite incontrovertible evidence of the Pakistani state's involvement with terror. The results of these efforts, however, have been far from encouraging. Multiple rounds of talks have not resulted in

any concrete, tangible results and it is far from clear that continuing discussions will lead to better outcomes.

In June 2013, following Nawaz Sharif's election as Prime Minister of Pakistan, hopes in India rose of some possible improvement in relations. Subsequent developments, however, have belied these expectations. It is apparent that despite the emergence of a legitimately elected civilian regime, it is in no position to make any credible commitments to New Delhi. For all practical purposes, the military establishment remains *primus inter pares* within the Pakistani state and is not about to relinquish its stranglehold over key foreign and security policy issues. Consequently, it is hardly much of a surprise that the newly elected civilian regime has been hamstrung from undertaking any meaningful initiatives to reduce tensions let alone terminate the rivalry with India. In the absence of an endogenous or exogenous shock that fundamentally alters the status of the Pakistani military establishment within the political milieu of the country, it is hard to envisage how a breakthrough might emerge in Indo-Pakistani relations.

Given the asymmetry in military capabilities between the two states, and one that is likely to widen in the future, especially if India can sustain a respectable level of economic growth, it is hardly surprising that the Pakistani military establishment has come to rely on the use of terrorist proxies to inflict significant costs on India (Swami 2006). Despite various efforts, the Indian state, given its many domestic vulnerabilities, has been unable to devise an effective defensive or deterrent strategy to thwart this strategy.

Its defensive efforts along the LoC including the building of a fence have proven unsuccessful in stopping infiltration into Jammu and Kashmir (Swami 2004). Nor has it been able to wholly secure its vast coastline even after the horrific terrorist attack on Mumbai in November 2008 (Polgreen and Bajaj 2009). Consequently, it does not have what is referred to as a strategy of defense through denial. Unfortunately, it has not been able to devise a coherent strategy of defense through punishment or retaliation either. In the wake of the 2001–2 crisis when the country came perilously close to war with Pakistan, it had sought to fashion a military strategy known as 'Cold Start' designed to carry out a limited, swift, sharp retaliatory response in the event of a Pakistan-based terrorist attack on Indian soil. However, as one analyst has argued, the actual ability to implement this strategy has been hamstrung as a consequence of organizational pathologies and inadequate planning (Ladwig 2007–2008). Furthermore, at least one chief of staff of the Indian army has stated that the doctrine does not formally exist (Pubby 2010).

India's policy-makers may have concluded that carrying out this strategy could be fraught with considerable risk. Given Pakistan's stated nuclear doctrine, which calls for a rapid nuclear escalation in the event of a sudden Indian conventional attack, the possibility of the outbreak of a nuclear war is indeed substantial. Pakistan's continuing investment in the development of tactical nuclear weapons further enhances the dangers of a nuclear war stemming from an Indian conventional attack (S. Joshi 2013). Given that Pakistan's nuclear doctrine and capabilities can undermine India's limited war doctrine, it is reasonable to surmise that India has sought to invest in the development of ballistic

missile defense capabilities to trump Pakistan's nuclear use plans. With such a shield in place, especially in battlefield circumstances, India could significantly attenuate, if not wholly eliminate, the consequences of any early Pakistani resort to the use of tactical nuclear weapons. It could then resort to an overwhelming strike against Pakistan with its nuclear arsenal largely intact.

Such a strategy, though understandable from the Indian standpoint, is nevertheless unlikely to work. Pakistan, in all likelihood, will not only seek to ramp up the production of its tactical nuclear weapons but will also seek to place them on mobile launchers, disperse them across the country, and resort to both camouflage and deception. Such choices would not only undermine the utility of India's costly investments in ballistic missile defense but could very possibly unravel its strategy of escalation dominance (Topychkanov 2012).

Apart from this troubled bilateral relationship, India's national security interests in the region are also likely to be affected quite dramatically as the International Security Assistance Force, under the aegis of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, winds down its presence and operations in Afghanistan. India's strategists and diplomatic corps well realize that Pakistan's security establishment will, no doubt, seek to undermine India's hard-won political presence and economic interests in the country.

The Nuclear Gyre

Apart from conventional threats, the country also needs to cope with two nuclear-armed neighbors. Since the overt acquisition of nuclear weapons, India's policy-makers publicly stated that the country sought to pursue a strategy of 'minimum credible deterrence' (Bastur 2006). Despite this stated commitment to the pursuit of such a strategy, India's actual programs and deployments suggest otherwise.

The creation of a strategic triad composed of long-range nuclear capable aircraft, a suite of land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and a submarine-based force goes well beyond the needs of a finite deterrent strategy. More to the point, the country's increasing investment in ballistic missiles defenses in conjunction with a set of robust ICBM capabilities could have significant adverse consequences for both strategic stability and crisis management (Kampani 2013). Furthermore, as some knowledgeable commentators have argued, despite the creation of a Strategic Forces Command, the operational dimensions of India's nuclear forces still face a number of serious organizational problems. Among other matters the control of the nuclear warheads are still divided between two civilian scientific agencies: the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre and the DRDO. Simultaneously, the three armed services remain in charge of the relevant combat aircraft, naval assets, and nuclear-capable ballistic missiles. In addition to this organizational anomaly, concerns persist about the actual material infrastructure of India's nuclear assets. These include, but

are not limited to, secure communication networks, redundant command and control nodes, safe storage and suitable hideouts for the nuclear force, and reliable transport infrastructure for the secure mobility of warheads, fissile cores, and delivery vehicles (Kampani 2013: 116).

Beyond Immediate Threats

Strategic Links with the US

Apart from coping with the threats from Pakistan and the PRC, India's policy-makers have yet to reach a working consensus on the contours of a strategic relationship with the United States. Reaching such an understanding may be quite significant for the future of India's national security. Unfortunately, three forces cast a cloud over any attempt to reach a clear-cut understanding on what might constitute such a working strategic partnership with the United States.

First, at an international level, there is little question that the 'shadow of the past' continues to dog the relationship. During the Cold War, as is well known, the two sides were frequently at odds. India was of little or no strategic significance to the United States and was often treated with a mixture of disdain and disregard. India, of course, had successfully fashioned a strategic partnership with the Soviet Union and this, in turn, had blighted any prospect of strategic convergence with the United States.

Second, and stemming from this strategic disjuncture, India's policy-makers were dismayed at the fitful support for Pakistan during the Cold War. Some instances of American support for Pakistan had seriously impinged upon India's security interests. Even after the Cold War's termination and a marked transformation of Indo-US strategic ties, the US relationship with Pakistan continues to rankle in New Delhi. Specifically, despite much discussion, the two sides cannot seem to find common ground about how best to deal with the Pakistani military establishment's willingness to use terror as part of its asymmetric war strategy against India. Despite persistent pleas from India, the United States has not proven willing or able to bring suitable pressure to bear on Pakistan to dismantle an extensive terror network. At most, US officials have been willing to publicly state that Pakistan's intelligence services have been involved in supporting terrorist attacks on Indian diplomatic and other assets in Afghanistan (Mazzetti and Schmitt 2008).

Third and finally, a segment of Indian domestic opinion and specifically those on India's political left, remain deeply skeptical about a US–India strategic partnership. Even though their political salience is clearly waning, they nevertheless constitute an important stumbling block along the pathway toward robust Indo-US strategic cooperation. In a related vein, another segment of India's attentive public, though not explicitly on the ideological left, also looks askance at enhancing strategic

cooperation with the United States on the putative grounds that it would compromise India's commitment to strategic autonomy.

These constraints notwithstanding, Indo-US strategic cooperation has moved forward, albeit fitfully, since the Cold War's end. It is beyond the scope of this analysis to carefully summarize the various steps that have been taken to promote such cooperation. However, the United States, despite its reliance on Pakistan especially after the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, and its subsequent ventures on the ground in Afghanistan, has sought to court India principally as a potential strategic hedge against the PRC.

Clearly with an eye toward eliciting India's cooperation, the Bush administration had chosen to overturn a decades-long policy of seeking to induce India to dispense with its nuclear weapons program. To that end, it expended considerable domestic as well as international political capital to forge a civilian nuclear agreement with India (Ganguly and Mistry 2006). Unfortunately, from the US standpoint, this attempt to engage India through the lifting of a range of sanctions related to its nuclear infrastructure did not result in a wider, cooperative strategic relationship (Burns 2007). Given the constraints of India's domestic politics, the strong streak of independence that permeates India's political culture, and the lingering memories of the US involvement with Pakistan during a significant segment of the Cold War years, all act as important constraints on the deepening of the Indo-US strategic partnership.

Might some of these factors lose their salience in the years ahead? It is difficult to provide a definitive answer to this question. Though much progress has been made in Indo-US relations over the past decade, political attitudes within India do not change swiftly. That said, three important developments are likely to shape the future of US–India strategic cooperation.

First, such cooperation will depend on the scope and pace of the US drawdown in Afghanistan after 2014. Indian policy-makers, quite understandably, are concerned that the end of the US military presence in Afghanistan may well open the floodgates to the expansion of Pakistan's military influence within that country and the possible return of a neo-Taliban regime. Such an outcome could well have significant adverse consequences for India's standing in the country and once again make it a haven for various anti-Indian terrorist organizations.

Second, a great deal depends on India's own reactions to the US 'rebalancing' strategy toward Asia. Thus far, India's policy-makers have expressed limited enthusiasm for this strategic shift despite an overt US attempt to make common cause with India. Though quietly pleased with the US interest in refocusing its attention to Asia, India's policy-makers simply do not wish to become a strategic surrogate for the United States as it seeks to address possible Chinese revanchist behavior in Asia (Ricks 2014).

Third and finally, much depends on how the US–India defense cooperation efforts evolve. Most recently, the US policy-makers were disappointed with India's decision to award the contract for 126 medium multi-role combat aircraft to Dassault Aviation of France (Clark 2012). According to a knowledgeable source, the decision was made solely on technical grounds after a careful scrutiny of the capabilities of the various

competitors for the lucrative contract (Tellis 2011). However, there is some lingering sentiment in US policy-making circles that it was politically untenable to award the contract to the United States in the wake of several other recent large ticket weapons sales agreements.

In the past, defense cooperation has been hobbled because of US unwillingness to transfer technology to India. However, this reluctance may now be finally ending. In September of 2013, the outgoing US Deputy Secretary of Defense, Ashton Carter, offered a glimpse into what may constitute a significant departure from past US practices. Specifically, on a visit to India he suggested that the two countries might wish to co-develop the next-generation Raytheon-Lockheed Martin FGM-148 Javelin anti-tank guided missile and also the Electro Magnetic Aircraft Launch System for the Indian navy's future aircraft carriers (Hardy and Bedi 2013). If these or other joint projects come to fruition they would mark a dramatic departure from past limitations on defense cooperation and provide a solid foundation for robust US–India defense cooperation and thereby help meet many of India's extant defense technology needs.

Russian Federation

India had enjoyed a mostly untroubled strategic partnership with the Soviet Union during much of the Cold War and especially after the early 1970s. This relationship, though quite beneficial in terms of weapons acquisitions, was not entirely bereft of costs. India, for example, felt compelled to maintain a studied public silence on the Soviet invasion and occupation of Afghanistan because of its acute dependence on both Soviet markets and arms transfers. Subsequently, India's decision, apparently at the behest of the Soviet Union, to support the Vietnamese-supported regime of Heng Samrin in Cambodia (Kampuchea) proved costly in terms of India's quest to obtain observer status with the Association of South-East Asian Nations.

The Cold War's end significantly attenuated this relationship. As the Soviet Union started to slowly unravel, President Mikhail Gorbachev made clear that he was no longer willing to uncritically offer diplomatic and strategic support to India on issues of importance. Matters worsened considerably under Boris Yeltsin who evinced scant interest in India.

Indeed, the Indo-Russian strategic relationship has not been fully revived under President Vladimir Putin. Though it has been resuscitated, few Indian policy-makers entertain any expectations that it can be restored to its Soviet era status. Instead, it is now on a narrower footing, focused primarily on a renewed arms transfer relationship but one hardly free from various troubles. India and Russia are developing a fifth-generation aircraft and co-producing the Brahmos missile. In November 2013, India finally took receipt of the retooled aircraft carrier *Admiral Gorshkov* (renamed INS *Vikramaditya*) after substantial delays and cost overruns (Pandit 2013). Obviously, given the long history of the arms transfer relationship with the former Soviet Union, India will not be able to promptly end its dependence on the principal successor state, Russia. Furthermore, some domestic constituencies, which have worked for an extended time span with their

Russian counterparts may argue that the Soviet Union was and Russia remains a more reliable supplier than the United States or other Western powers, the troubles with the aircraft carrier notwithstanding.

Conclusion

After six decades of independence, India's record on its national security policies presents distinctly mixed results. It has, barring the debacle of the 1962 Sino-Indian border war, managed to fend off attempts to challenge its territorial integrity. It has also managed to ward off internal secessionist threats even though, as argued, a number of them persist.

The country has created a defense industrial base but its ability to deliver products that meet the expectations of the armed forces has frequently fallen short. These state-run industries have also proven to be hopelessly inefficient in the use of allocated funds and are known for cost overruns on any number of projects. In the absence of greater institutional accountability or the introduction of substantial private competition it is hard to envisage that the sector can be reformed to ensure that it can demonstrate greater institutional efficacy.

Finally, though the country chose to end its policy of nuclear ambiguity in 1998, it has yet to fashion a wholly coherent nuclear strategy. Instead, despite the professed commitment to a 'credible minimum deterrent', its nuclear forces are expanding in a fashion that hardly appears compatible with such a professed goal. The country's failure to forthrightly tackle this component of its national security apparatus leaves it exposed to considerable risk given the sheer significance of a nuclear deterrent.

Notes

1. The term 'appeasement' is used here in the pre-Munich sense of the term. See Kennedy (1989).
2. A document that was declassified in 2013 revealed an infelicitous dimension of the Indian army role during the 'police action' that led to the integration of the Princely State of Hyderabad into the Indian Union. See Thompson (2013).

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CHAPTER 12

RESOURCES

LIGIA NORONHA

India's need for resources is large and growing. The demand drivers are the expanding population, the need for development and infrastructure, the growing middle class, the rapid rate of urbanization, and advertising's narrative of a good life. The current population, which stands at 1.2 billion, is expected to increase by 1.1 per cent per year on average to 2030, reaching 1.45 billion. This population comprises a slim layer that is very affluent, a middle class that is growing in consumption demands, and a very large share of the population that is still largely deprived of basic goods and services, such as electricity, housing, and roads. High projected economic growth rates suggest that the need for materials (fossil fuels, biomass, non-metal minerals, and metals) will rise threefold by 2030 over 2008 figures, but for minerals and metals alone, the rise could extend to over tenfold (GIZ et al. 2013).

Oil has always been a strategic asset in India. Increasingly, coal came to be considered a strategic asset, nationalized and reserved for the public sector. Self-reliance and national capability drove oil policy until the early 1990s. This thinking is still dominant in coal. However, despite this orientation in resources policy, in 2013, 70 per cent of oil consumed was imported as was 13 per cent of coal. Import dependency is projected to increase to 90–9 per cent for oil and to 11–45 per cent for coal by 2031 (Planning Commission 2006). In the absence of improved exploration and development activity for oil, gas, and coal, their domestic availability will be ever more problematic in the future. In fossil fuels, therefore, far from becoming more self-reliant, India will become more globally dependent.

While hitherto security concerns over this situation related mostly to oil, and more recently to coal, high anticipated domestic demand, and inadequate exploration and production will also increase import dependency for various minerals and metals. Import dependency is at 100 per cent for several key minerals (Ministry of Mines 2012). In the more abundant minerals, such as iron ore, governance issues had, by 2013, brought mining activities almost to a halt in parts of India

This chapter first discusses the nature of challenges that natural resources pose to India's growth. It then discusses four related issues: India's resource trade and investment

patterns; the responses its searches for resources have evoked; the sustainability and equity challenges around resource development for India's growth; and finally the foreign, trade, and security policy implications of this increased global resource dependence.

The Nature of the Challenges

Except for land and water, the challenges to India's growth until 2030 from the requirement for vastly expanded natural resources do not primarily arise from resource scarcity but from other factors: low exploration and development activity, policy and regulatory deficits, and a decreasing 'social license' (consent from the local community) to operate. Without fundamental change on all these fronts, significantly increased imports will be required. India's role in the global resource trade will thus need to grow considerably. This sector of international trade faces a number of challenges: rising and volatile commodity prices; the geopolitics around supply sources; trade-distorting policy measures (including occasional sanctions regimes such as that imposed on Iran in recent years, reducing total international oil and gas flows); and potential carbon caps. Some minerals and metals are critical for the technological competitiveness of the country. For example, cobalt, tungsten, and rare earths are vital (Khanna and Ganeshan 2010). Take the case of India's efforts to engage with green energy. Renewable energy sources, such as wind and solar, and more energy-efficient appliances need minerals and metals whose availability needs to be ensured, in a world increasingly competing for them in the future (Ministry of Mines 2012: Table 1; Khanna and Ganeshan 2010).

When resources are imported in large quantities, two issues are of immediate concern to a country's macroeconomy and external policy: affordability and access. Affordability is linked to commodity prices and the capacity of the economy to pay for imports. Access depends on whether the resources are available in the international market and can be sourced easily, and the ability to create, maintain, and sustain positive relations with the exporting country. High oil prices also impact the poor disproportionately as they raise the cost of food and transport steeply for them. Gupta (2008) has shown India to be the world's third most oil vulnerable country, largely because of its lower ability to pay for imports.

Macroeconomic stability requires careful management of the impact of highly volatile crude oil prices on foreign exchange outflows, the domestic pricing of petroleum products, and government revenues. Since India imports 70 per cent of its crude oil requirements, when oil prices rise, its oil bill soars. The ability to pay for imports depends very much on export earnings. At the height of the oil prices in July 2008, the cost of importing oil amounted to about 6 per cent of GDP. In 2011/12, it is estimated to be equal to 46 per cent of exports (MOPNG 2012). The current account deficit in recent years ballooned as a result of the need to pay for oil imports, but also for imports of coal and iron ore. Hence, India's export performance is a key element, or should be, in its energy security (Nanda 2009).

The issue of access is centered around the current sources of supply and related geopolitical concerns. India is dependent for 67 per cent of its oil on West Asia (the Middle East). Twenty-five per cent of oil imports come from Saudi Arabia alone. The potential disruption of oil supplies from this region has been a worry for years and has influenced foreign policies adopted by importing countries, including India (Yergin 1991, 2011). Disruption of supplies by a gas producer, as in the case of a long-running dispute between Ukraine and Russia some years ago, is also of potential concern. As coal becomes more globally traded, this market too may become more dependent on political factors.

Geopolitical risk arising from dependence on international sources of supply for minerals and metals may well be higher than that for fossil fuels, given their more concentrated distribution among fewer countries. Consolidation in the mining industry has accelerated in recent years through mergers and acquisition activities, creating a greater concentration of those extracting these critical inputs for industrial and other production, and is particularly true for critical minerals and metals.[1] Increased resource nationalism is also worrying. For example, China is becoming a dominant player in critical minerals.[2] Recently, it placed a ban on exports of rare earths, raising global prices for these vital minerals by 300–700 per cent (US DoE 2010). China argues that it has a right to limit exports of resources that are polluting, energy-intensive, and strategic, a case which at the time of writing was being reviewed by the World Trade Organization (WTO).[3]

At the level of local communities, there is growing hostility to resource development projects given that adequate policy frameworks that reflect benefit sharing and compensation are still not in place or not enforced, globally and in India.[4] Responsible governance of the extractive resource industry has yet to emerge internationally, a fact now acknowledged by the United Nations.[5]

The geopolitics surrounding natural resources is turbulent, as leading countries vie for access to oil and gas, negotiate over shares of 'carbon space', and dispute jurisdiction and rights over ocean resources. It is not just the resource-rich and resource-poor parts of the world that create the challenge to resource security, but also the differential resource use between and within nations. The increased global engagement of countries such as India to secure resources disrupts an earlier status quo and creates pressure for a more equitable sharing of natural resources. The intensity with which emerging nations react and adapt to local and global challenges to the security of natural resource supply is also conditioned by perceptions of how their emergence is viewed by the industrialized world and their sense of their capacity to respond to supply crises effectively.

A new opportunity for a different approach to resource management presents itself in the Arctic, where estimates suggest that offshore oil reserves may be 13 per cent of the global total of undiscovered oil, and natural gas 30 per cent of the global reserves. This could create a new 'resource' rush in the region (Carlson et al. 2009). India and China became observers in the Arctic Council[6] in May 2013. As Shyam Saran (2013) observes, this should present an opportunity to negotiate for a 'global commons' rather

than succumb to fierce competition for these energy resources, particularly given the potential environmental consequences of uncontrolled exploration and extraction in this environmentally fragile area. He advocates that India, as a champion of the principle of equitable burden-sharing and intergenerational equity, champion such an approach.

Resource Trade and Investments

India's presence in global resource trade and investments is evident in increased imports, especially of coal and oil; the trade ties and cross-investments in energy and materials being executed; the mergers, takeovers, new investments in steel and increased foreign direct investment (FDI) in the minerals sector abroad. Indian public sector companies such as ONGC Videsh, Coal India Videsh, and private companies have made resource investments in over 30 countries, including Australia, Indonesia, and Canada.[7]

Following the terrorist attacks on the US of September 11, 2001, 'Facing East' became very attractive to West Asia (the Middle East), as the Asian region provided large, dependable, and growing markets featuring strong energy demand, while in an excellent position to supply West Asia with non-energy goods and services.[8] India and other consuming countries of Asia too turned more to the producing Asian countries. In minerals and metals, India looks to Afghanistan and Central Asia. Australia has emerged as an important actual and potential supplier for Indian companies over the last ten years. Given the complementarities of resource needs and supply potential and the concerns over coal use in a carbon-constrained world, Australia and India seem poised to develop a strategic relationship in resource trade.

Uranium trade is key to India's three-stage nuclear program. After the 2008 India–US nuclear cooperation agreement and the waiver by the Nuclear Suppliers Group of its strictures earlier applying to India, New Delhi has signed nuclear cooperation agreements with Namibia, Argentina, Canada, Kazakhstan, and South Korea and achieved a broad based agreement with Russia. Other agreements are in place with the United Kingdom and Mongolia. Negotiations are under way with Japan and the European Union. And very positive indications were articulated by Australia in February of 2014[9] to sell uranium to India.

But trade in uranium is not easy to effect. There are some security implications that may arise from interstate competition and possible 'uranium wars'; intra-state conflict in uranium-rich countries; and questions over the security of supply routes (Sharma 2010: 38–40).

Thus, India is increasingly accessing resources globally, either through long-term contracts for supplies or by acquiring resource assets abroad or buying in the spot market, the latter as a way to reduce exposure to the commodity price volatility in the international market, especially for critical materials. Bilateral deals are in place covering oil, for example in Iraq, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, and Venezuela; liquefied natural gas from

Qatar and Australia; pipeline gas from Turkmenistan and now from Mozambique and Tanzania. Coal is sourced from Australia, South Africa, and Indonesia. India is also keen to import liquefied shale gas from the United States.

India could invest much more in regional cooperation to harness resource complementarities better (UNESCAP 2013: ch. 7). The Asian region is rich in resources: oil in Central Asia, the Russian Federation, and Iran; natural gas in Central Asia, Iran, Myanmar, Bangladesh, and the Russian Federation; coal in India, Pakistan, Australia, and China; hydropower in Bhutan, Nepal, and the Greater Mekong subregion. Pipeline negotiations with Iran are still pending in part due to bilateral differences, in part due to the sanctions affecting Iran and to subregional politics that inhibit improved regional cooperation (Batra 2009; Ahmad 2009). Indian inaction, cross-border safety issues, high transit fees requested by Pakistan, the price of gas required by Iran, and the issue of US sanctions for investments in Iran, all came together to restrict this source of natural gas. The debates around the India–US nuclear deal brought matters on Iranian gas to a head, when India was advised by Washington to decide between nuclear energy or natural gas. But for India the former is a long-term option, while the latter could serve as a bridge towards it.

Global Responses to Searches for Resources: A Case of Double Standards?

The vocabulary often invoked to describe the global search for resources by emerging economies, such as India and China, includes 'hunger for resources', 'competition', 'conflict', and 'resource wars'. Such characterizations are suggestive of double standards. Resources have always been perceived as key potential bottlenecks to sustained economic growth, hence the spread of colonialism in centuries gone by and the constant quest overseas for natural resources. The quest goes on today.

Investing in overseas assets as instruments of energy and resource security has been much debated within India and internationally. Do such investments actually further resource security? Many argue that it does not make sense to invest in these assets, especially given political concerns with respect to the countries involved. The counter-argument is that reliance on the global resource market would serve India better (Planning Commission 2006). Some energy experts argue that given the greater risk diversification provided by international markets, the interdependence of energy consumers and producers, and the interdependence of national economies, the latter would be the better strategy for countries like India (Wesley 2007: 2–5).

This has now become an academic argument. While a physical disruption of oil supply has in fact not happened recently, and may well not happen in the future given the stakes at play, it is the volatility and the unpredictability of commodity prices that stress

economies. Countries such as India, China, Japan, Germany, and the Republic of Korea have undertaken direct investments in resources outside of their own territorial boundaries. The political logic is evident. A country with large import needs cannot rely on market forces alone to secure its resources. Markets have been known to be rigged to the disadvantage of those who rely on them extensively. Volatile oil prices can wreak havoc on a dependent economy. So-called market economies such as the United States and the United Kingdom have never relied entirely on market forces, nor can others, particularly more vulnerable players, who must develop diplomatic strategies that can help them at times of market disruption.

Several resource investments in India have now acquired a strategic dimension, with the issue for policy-makers being one of mitigating the risks involved, with implications for the weighting of interests and values within Indian foreign policy (Mohan 2009; Noronha,2010). Indian diplomacy will, it is argued, increasingly be compelled to defend the foreign interests of private firms (Mohan 2009: 130). Such strategies have long rested at the heart of US and other Western foreign policies, but for India the equation is relatively new and could prove controversial in future circumstances.

Critics from countries within the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) have complained about the human rights records of some countries in which the Indian government and private sector firms have made investments. But Western qualms can be contested on several grounds.[10] First, the fact that a large number of international companies from the OECD countries have been doing business with resource-rich countries often featuring poor human rights performance for a long time to secure their own economic interests. Second, the latecomers, such as India and China, need to access resources that are not yet 'locked up' by either Western energy companies or national oil companies of resource-rich nations, which often is only possible in countries featuring imperfect track records on democratization, rights, and internal development achievements. Third, new resource ties will, in fact, increase the stakes of Asian consumer countries in these regions and could help increase stability and better governance over time through example, persuasion, and building institutional structures.

There have been discrete instances in the quest for oil of competition between India and China in countries where each sought access, with China being the more successful. Study of these cases suggests that the outcome speaks to India's more commercial rather than political motivation in pursuing these resources. China's quest for oil often has official backing because the acquisitions have been driven by strategic imperatives. And the resulting 'deeper pockets' of Chinese bidders explain the outcome.

Sustainability and Equity Challenges

Sustainability and equity are the two key issues that require more focus in assessing security around natural resources. Sustainability of finite resource policy features both

an intergenerational and an intragenerational dimension. The former arises from the exhaustible nature of fossil fuels and minerals and fears for future generations of their non-availability. But there are also concerns around the footprints arising from their use, such as excessive accumulation of greenhouse gases, especially carbon dioxide. Inequities arise in terms of 'who benefits' and 'who loses' from natural resource development, relevant to considerations of justice.

Significant environmental and social implications arise from natural resource development: (i) the related use of or damage to other resources such as land, air, water, forests, and biodiversity create local environmental and social impacts. These affect local lives, and create burdens on individuals, communities, and ecosystems which are only partly reflected in the cost of production of the resource, if at all; and (ii) carbon emissions from oil, natural gas, coal, and shale gas inevitably impact societies, sometimes disastrously.

The UN General Assembly resolution 1803 of 1962 that gave permanent sovereignty over natural resources to resource-owning countries was, in ensuing decades, tempered by a 'do no harm' objective underpinned in international agreements and principles by such notions as sustainable development, the precautionary principle, and the 'polluter pays' principle. In India today, the increase in demand for raw materials is leading to rising demands at the subnational level—from resource-rich constituent states and the people of these states—for more equitable and fair systems of revenue and benefit sharing. We also see such dynamics in Nigeria, Indonesia, Malaysia, Bolivia, and the Congo, giving rise to conflicts and ultimately to a reduced 'social license' to operate.

India is mineral-rich, but many minerals are located in ecologically sensitive regions and often in regions inhabited by indigenous populations. Clarity is required around the choices made with regard to protection of ecosystems and minerals development. How should free, prior, informed consent of relevant constituents within the country, including local populations, be secured through frameworks for minerals development, for example in tribal regions that have a special constitutional status? In a vibrant, fractious democracy like India's with many political and social fault lines, the answers to these questions are not self-evident.

An insufficiently understood dimension of resource security is the importance of domestic resource governance. Poor regulatory governance over the last decade has led both to increased illegal mining and to a reduced 'social license' to operate. Poor governance leads to overexploitation of resources, irresponsible resource development, local discontent, and conflict. The resources sector in India, especially the mineral sector, provides evidence for the thesis that the state in recent times has lost trust and legitimacy, being more focused on accumulation.[11] The net result is a diminished social license to operate and reduced access to resources. Mineral development in India is currently in the doldrums amidst a decline in national consensus on mining. Weak or absent institutions are the rule rather than the exception (Noronha et al. 2009). Legislation and proposed new regulations have languished, with dire results.

As federalism plays out in India (Noronha and Srivastava 2012), national interest considerations and the still weak resource-rich states trump local demands on issues

of resource extraction. The strengthened standing of the subnational states relative to a weakened center of India's federation will increasingly lead to actions by states on resource issues that have major trade and foreign policy implications.

Global concerns over climate change impinge on national decisions with respect to coal. In addition to the policy debate in India around the extent and extractability of India's coal resources (Chand and Sridharan 2008; Noronha and Sudarshan 2009; Batra and Chand 2011), there is an ongoing debate on the right rate of extraction to be used.[12] Should nations with a competitive advantage in fossil fuels move slowly today on policies to mitigate carbon emissions or should they use their current economic strength to develop longer-term competitive advantages in a carbon-constrained world? (Garnaut 2008). Some argue that faster extraction makes strategic sense for India, given possible carbon caps in the future, but this ignores the fact that coal development in India involves clearing very rich forests and relocating people, which is politically difficult and unethical without the right frameworks in place.

Foreign, Trade, and Security Policy Considerations

Resource security, as Yergin argued in the case of energy security, extends beyond countering threats, to relations among nations, and their interactions (Yergin 2011: 264). Building relations beyond India's national borders to further resource ties needs to become a key objective of Indian foreign and trade policy.[13] This is required across resources and global regions. The range of instruments for such a policy varies: consumer–producer dialogues, lines of credit, downstream and cross-investments, resources for infrastructure deals, investments in sectors such as petrochemicals, and strategic partnerships (Ahmad 2009: 70–3).

Despite India's energy dependence on the Gulf, much more needs to be done to take this relationship forward. India needs to take the initiative to enhance the interdependence with Gulf countries both to cement relations as well as to enhance cross-investments.[14] The changed US–Iran equation and the possible lifting of sanctions may also favor long-term thinking on energy ties with Iran. India needs to seize the moment, when a number of opportunities present themselves in West Asia.

The hyphenation with China on resource strategies is another domain that attracts attention. Sometimes there are overlapping interests, as seen in the decarbonizing debates in the international energy and climate negotiations; at other times, there are suggestions of potential conflict over resources between these two countries, even suggestions of future resource wars. This hyphenation can both work to India's advantage and against it, favorably on climate negotiations for example, on partnerships in prospecting for energy supplies, and on joint green energy studies (Mahalingam 2009). At the bilateral level, there is agreement to work together on hydrocarbons. Plurilateral

frameworks could also prove promising, for example, involving China, India, and Russia since 2002. More recently, Track II India–China dialogues and collaborative research projects exist on issues such as low carbon development.

Given India's location in the Indian Ocean, and the importance of maritime transit to its energy and resource trade, the Indian navy is acquiring a key role in providing security and protection of economic interests (Khurana 2009). This is evident not only in its role in protecting exclusive economic zone resources and their development, for example offshore oil and gas, deep sea mining, and fisheries, but also in securing for trade the sea lines of communication through which most of India's global trade, in value and volume, traverses. A mix of 'soft' power options are also evident in this collaboration with countries in the Indian Ocean, such as maritime capacity-building, shipping ties, disaster management, and coastguard diplomacy.

In the future, the Indian Ocean and its rim will increasingly become an arena that India's foreign, trade, and security policy-makers will need to engage in more,[15] because (i) resources are increasingly sourced from countries in East Africa, and the East and South East Asia region, and from India's offshore; (ii) increased trade volumes from Indian Ocean countries imply more dependence on the ocean routes;[16] and (iii) China too seeks to build stakes in and around the Indian Ocean, both to secure its maritime energy routes, but also its larger strategic interests in the regions.

The globalization of resource demand, and the partial globalization of its supply, are creating pressures for both a greater reliance on multilateral institutions such as the WTO, but also for more expedient plurilateral groupings. The increased use of the WTO to resolve resource trade issues will require a greater engagement by India with international trade law and with the overlap between trade and environment issues. Non-tariff related matters, relating for example to intellectual property, labor rights, and the environment will also need to be broached regionally and plurilaterally.

Offshore developments in the South China Sea and in the Arctic, deep offshore deposits of oil and gas, the international sea bed minerals, all give rise to new issues for international resources policy that have implications for how India conducts its foreign policy. Increasingly unconventional resource access issues suggest that traditional boundary law and notions of permanent sovereignty are moving from effective occupation and control over resources, to a greater emphasis on the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea-type approaches to boundary delimitation, based on adjacent and mid-point delimitations, and ideas about the global commons, and shared and regional sovereignty.[17]

More sustainable mandates are also raising issues of 'responsible sovereignty' over resource development, use, and distribution. Global and local forces are intertwining. Not only is pressure increasing from global initiatives such as the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, but there is also evidence that pressure from Indian civil society for greater transparency is beginning to bear fruit, as seen in the open data portals of the government. While the state is still the primary player in determining outcomes on resources, it is by no means the sole actor to do so. A host of other actors at the global, regional, national, and subnational levels share the stage with national

governments—either enabling or challenging the state in its efforts to deal with relevant issues. Sharma recognizes these global and local forces when she states:

> By acting 'responsibly', what is meant is that the state has accepted limits on its absolute sovereign powers by sharing, delegating and devolving domestically (through practices of good governance, broadly speaking) as well as by constraining its actions by adhering to legal conditionalities as well as normative values internationally (through mechanisms of global governance ...). (Sharma 2011: 16)

All these developments will require a rethink on how India perceives itself and orients its policies. Three scenarios are possible: (i) as a member of the Global South seeking a new resource order based on more egalitarian and sustainable norms and principles that it helps shape (my own preferred version), or (ii) as an emerging economy that finds that the Global North is seeking to impose norms that constrain its growth, which the North never applied to itself through its own industrial growth phase, and thereby adopts defensive posturing, or (iii) as a country slated for great power status and so aligns itself with more predatory resource policies to enable fast growth.

Conclusion

On grounds of supply security, equity, and sustainability there is an urgent need for the Indian state to engage more sharply, effectively, and with greater commitment on the natural resources question. While India currently features low resource consumption per capita relative to other countries, it will need materials in very largequantities to meet the development needs of its population, which in turn creates the potential, in the absence of careful management, for large, unwelcome, local and global environmental and social footprints. As the Indian state grapples with resource access and availability concerns, it must now also factor in 'acceptability' of resource options and 'accountability', 'transparency', and 'responsibility' in resource development.

This serious management challenge is clear at three levels: the absolute need to meet the resource requirements for its development objectives; the requirement to ensure ecological sustainability and social inclusiveness in its resources policy; and in reconciling the interests and preferences of key actors at the central, state, and local levels within India and those of India's key external partners for supply, export, and more widely.

India needs to move to a more responsible and people-centered resources policy, one that focuses on both integrity of process (including transparency) and convincing outcomes for improved well-being of the population and for ecological sustainability (Noronha 2012). It also needs to adopt resource efficiency as an organizing principle of the Indian economy to reduce both the resource footprint but also the associated environmental and social impacts. But such a lean resource economy will be difficult to create and sustain within a global environment defined by continuing imbalances in

institutional arrangements and geopolitical struggles for dwindling natural resources (Gray 1999). There is, therefore, an urgent need for international action to attend to allocation, regulation, and sustainability in the global resource economy, in as harmonious a political atmosphere as possible. In the absence of such an approach internationally, the future is bleak for India and the world.

Notes

1. For a discussion on raw materials and possible challenges to multilateral trade, see Stumer (2008).
2. China accounts for around half of the rare earth reserves of the world and for about 97 per cent of world output of the 17 rare earths. It is the single largest producer of the mineral. It is also the single most important producer of molybdenum and tungsten.
3. It is reported that the WTO has ruled against China on grounds that it goes against its rules. <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/486d5c68-40b5-11e3-ae19-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2jrYcoyfE>, accessed November 6, 2013.
4. The literature on natural resources and conflicts is vast. For some key authors see: Ross (1999); Collier and Hoeffler (2000); Klare (2001) Pegg (2003).
5. See Thematic Group 10 of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network. <http://unsdsn.org/what-we-do/thematic-groups/good-governance-of-extractive-and-land-resources/>. See also <http://unsdsn.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/SDSN_factsheet_vf.pdf>.
6. Canada, the United States, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, and Russia are the original members of the Arctic Council founded in 1996.
7. India's most visible presence is in Africa: oil investments in Nigeria, Sudan, and Angola; LNG investments in Algeria, Egypt, and Nigeria; coal in South Africa and Mozambique; uranium investments in Niger and in the Congo.
8. The IMF/World Bank 2006 Program of Seminars, for example, had a special panel on 'Facing East: Oil and Ties Between the Middle East and Asia', Singapore, September 16–18, 2006.
9. <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Australia-seeks-to-draw-India-into-tighter-embrace-with-nuclear-deal/articleshow/30540428.cms>, accessed February 25, 2014.
10. These arguments are drawn from Noronha (2007).
11. 'Which kind of state can deliver which kind of development?' IC4HD lecture by Boaventura Souza Santos, India Habitat Centre, February 17, 2014.
12. Chawla Committee on Allocation of Natural Resources, 2011.
13. For a lucid account of energy security and India's foreign policy see Mohan (2009). The arguments are very similar for the resources case.
14. See C. Raja Mohan's op ed 'Bridging the Gulf': <http://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/bridging-the-gulf/>, accessed February 25, 2014.
15. For a discussion of how geography impacts India's room for maneuver and how it can influence its regional or great power status, see Kaplan (2012: ch. 12).
16. The heightened activities of the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) support this increased recognition of the economic potential of trade among countries of the region.
17. Presentation by M. Teehankee and C. Dasgupta on 'Resource Access and Security: Emerging International Law Issues', TERI internal seminar, September 7, 2012.

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CHAPTER 13

INDIA'S INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

ROHAN MUKHERJEE

Introduction

Foreign aid is often defined as economic flows to countries and multilateral institutions provided by official agencies that are intended for the welfare of developing countries and are concessional in character, i.e. containing a grant component of at least 25 per cent (Lancaster 2000: 9).[1] Foreign aid may be connected to but is not the same as trade, investment, or other tools of economic diplomacy. In this chapter, the term 'welfare' is interpreted purely in socio-economic terms—efforts aimed at democracy promotion or military assistance are not counted as foreign aid.

The Indian government's own conception of foreign aid frequently diverges from international standards. One analyst observes, 'What [India] calls "overseas development assistance" is often a mixed bag of project assistance, purchase subsidies, lines of credit, travel costs, and technical training costs incurred by the Indian government' (Agrawal 2007: 5). In this chapter, foreign aid includes only loans and grants given by Indian government agencies to foreign countries and multilateral institutions for the purpose of socio-economic development. Although many studies focus additionally on lines of credit, these do not strictly qualify as foreign aid since they are employed to promote Indian exports rather than the welfare of recipient countries. However, since the Indian government views them as part of aid (MEA 2013: xii), they are useful indicators of its priorities and will be discussed as a separate category.

The rest of this chapter surveys the post-1947 trajectory of Indian aid to examine how new this phenomenon is, who its beneficiaries are, what types of activities it funds, the motives behind it, and its potential contribution to foreign policy. In doing so, the chapter seeks to dispel certain myths that have recently developed about India's foreign aid giving.

The Novelty of Indian Aid

India's international development program has received much scholarly attention in the last decade, particularly since 2003 when the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government directed an end to all but the largest foreign aid programs benefiting India, and an increase in India's own aid to other countries. Taking this announcement as a point of departure, analysts have focused on India as a 'rising donor', clubbing it with other emerging powers such as China, South Africa, and Brazil in a group of countries that have traditionally not been major aid providers (Chin and Quadir 2012). Observers have focused on the expansion of India's aid budget, the widening of its geographic scope, the growing importance of strategic or self-interested factors in determining allocations, and differences in the nature of Indian aid compared to that of traditional donors. The overall picture is of a historic break in Indian aid since the early 2000s, in keeping with India's growing economic weight and global influence.

Contrary to these views, Indian aid giving is by no means a recent or new phenomenon. India started allocating funds to foreign aid in 1950, when it became the largest developing-country contributor to the Colombo Plan, devised by Commonwealth nations for technical assistance and aid to countries in South and South-East Asia. In 1951, India began providing bilateral aid to Nepal, a relationship that continues to this day. Later in the 1950s, India began providing considerable sums in aid to Bhutan and Sikkim (then an Indian protectorate). In 1964, the government launched the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) program, which leveraged Indian expertise in statistics, irrigation, railway engineering, tropical medicine, and small-scale industries, among other things, to promote welfare in developing countries across Asia and Africa (Chandavarkar 1972: 18). In 1972, following the creation of an independent Bangladesh, India allocated Rs. 2 billion for refugee repatriation, post-war reconstruction, foreign reserves, and training (Vohra 1980: 100–2). Throughout the Cold War, India was either a founding member or a major contributor to various multilateral economic development initiatives, including the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation, the Special Commonwealth African Assistance Plan (SCAAP), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

The strongest case for a twenty-first-century break from tradition can be made in reference to the quantum of aid provided (Roychoudhury 2013: 22). Figure 13.1 plots the Ministry of External Affairs' (MEA's) foreign aid allocations from 1966 to 2011 in constant US dollars (Fuchs and Vadlamannati 2013: 112). Here we see the point of inflection occur not in 2003 but around 1994, well before the NDA government came to power. The aid budget doubled between 1994 and 1996 (MEA 1994, 1995, 1996), a period that saw the Indian economy unprecedentedly sustain average annual growth of almost

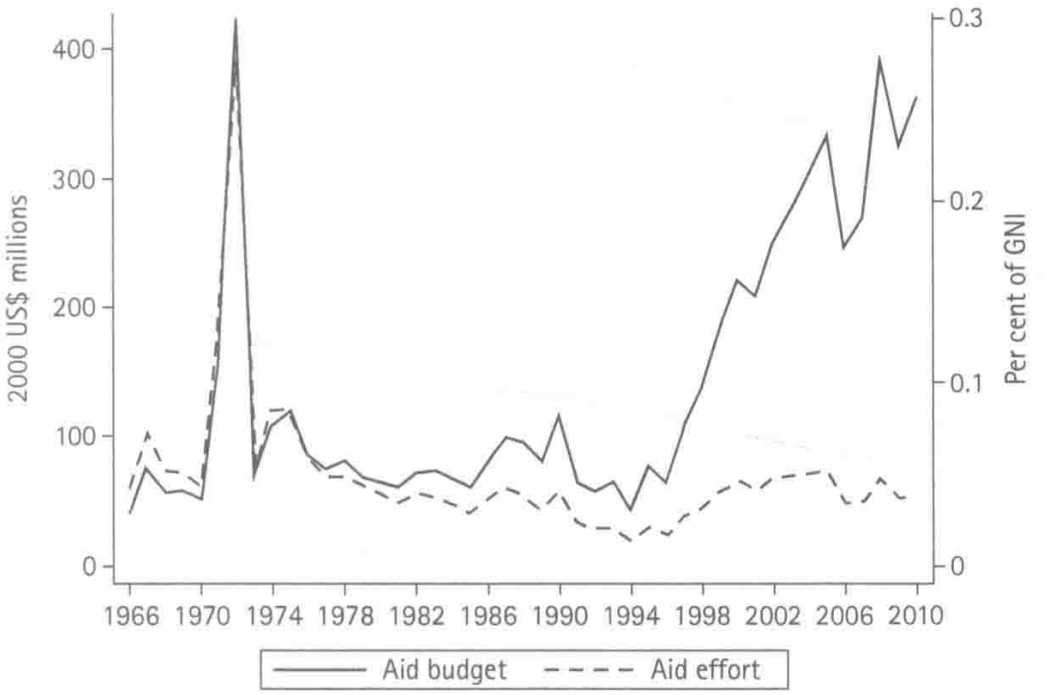

FIGURE 13.1 Aid budget of India's Ministry of External Affairs, 1966–2010.

Source: Fuchs and Vadlamannati (2013: 112).

7.5 per cent (World Bank 2015). Since this period, the MEA's foreign aid budget has been on an upward trajectory, reaching Rs. 54.7 billion, or just over US$1 billion, in 2012 (Government of India 2013: 106).[2] Some scholars view this dramatic rise as a puzzle, yet it is unsurprising that a country with a history of aid giving such as India would increase its aid budget as its economy grew. In fact, this increase is less impressive than it may seem. As a share of its gross national income (GNI), the MEA's aid budget was the same in 2011 as it was in 1966, at 0.04 per cent.[3] The puzzle then is not how an increasingly prosperous India expanded its aid budget, but rather why a very poor country like post-independence India could maintain an aid effort roughly akin to its present-day level. This question will be addressed below in the section on motivations behind India's aid.

In the new millennium, the major transition in India's relationship to foreign aid is not in aid giving but in aid receiving. As Figure 13.2 shows, bilateral aid flows to India from rich countries in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)'s Development Assistance Committee (DAC) declined from US$5.7 billion in 1960 (in 2012 dollars) to almost nothing in 2004, following the Indian government's decision to limit aid receipts. By 2012, this figure was back up to US$1.5 billion, but as a share of national income remained below 0.1 per cent, down from almost 2 per cent in 1960. A similar trend is visible in the World Bank's annual aid flows to India (Figure 13.3), which peaked in 1982 both in amount (US$2.7 billion in 2012 dollars) and as share of national income (0.6 per cent). In 2012, India received US$677 million in grants and concessional credits from the World Bank, and the share of this figure in national income was 0.04 per cent. India's foreign aid story is therefore not one of increasing aid effort but declining aid dependence.

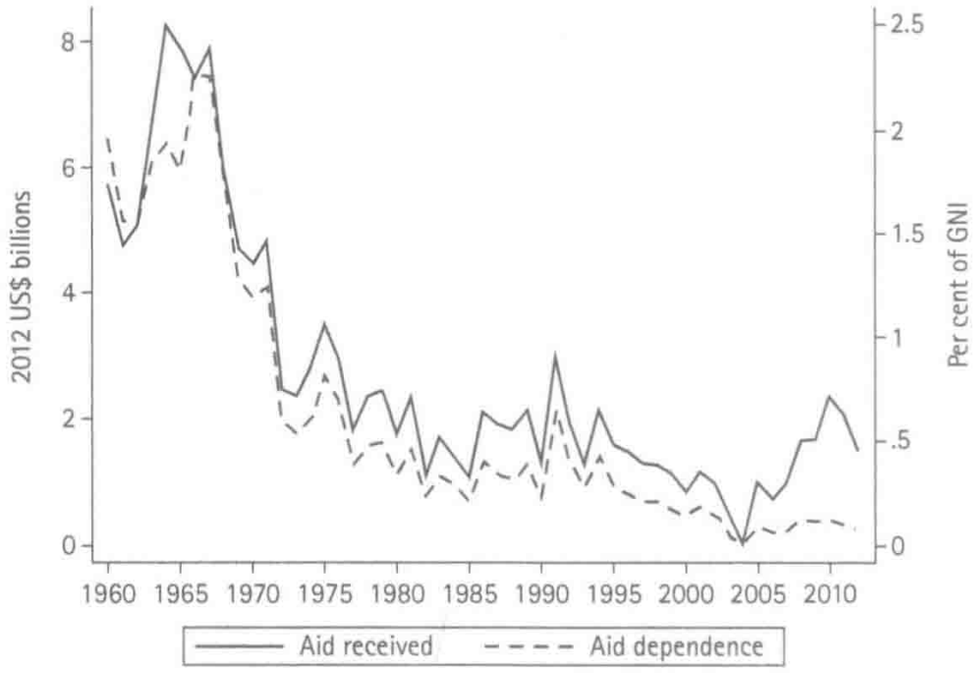

FIGURE 13.2 Development Assistance Committee (DAC) aid to India, 1960–2012.

Source: The OECD's Query Wizard for International Development Statistics (QWIDS). Figure is for Official Development Assistance (ODA).

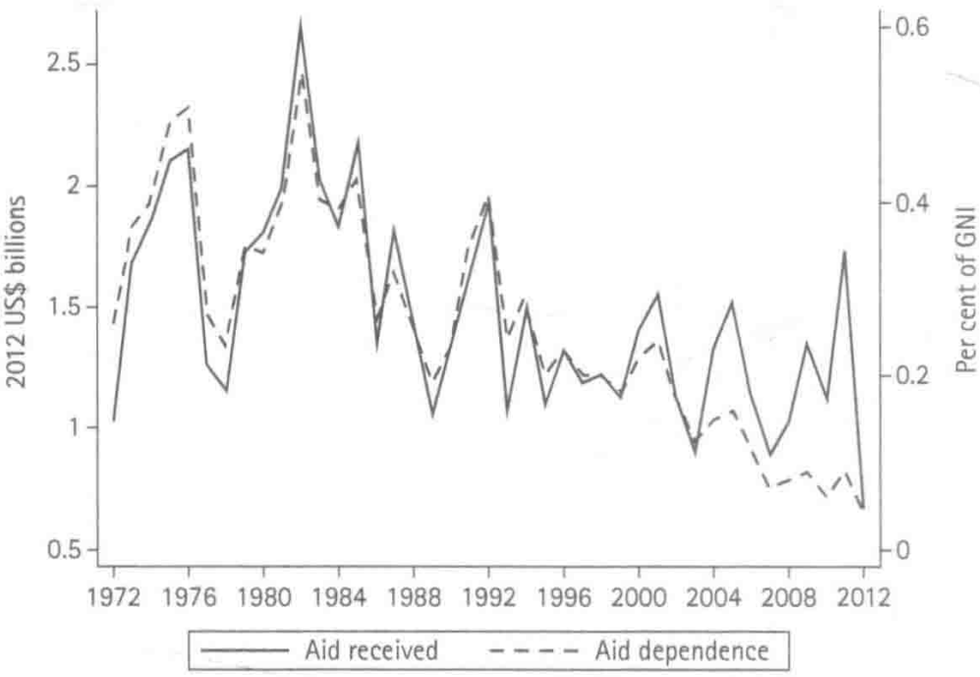

FIGURE 13.3 World Bank aid to India, 1972–2012.

Source: World Bank Development Indicators, annual IDA grants and credits.

Recipients of Indian Aid

The earliest recipients of Indian aid were the Himalayan kingdoms of Nepal, Bhutan, and Sikkim, each of which had a special treaty-based relationship with India. Since the 1960s, and particularly since the end of the Cold War, India has also become a major donor to Afghanistan, the Maldives, and Sri Lanka, as well as various other countries in

the developing world. A common narrative, therefore, with regard to post-1990s Indian aid is that its geographic scope has expanded to include countries in Africa and Latin America (Chaturvedi 2012: 558).

There is some truth to this assertion: the share of bilateral assistance to developing countries outside South Asia in the MEA's 2012 budget was roughly 6 per cent, up from 2.8 per cent in 1966 (Government of India 2013; MEA 1967). However, South Asia's share in India's aid budget has not varied significantly over the decades, standing at 89.7 per cent in 2012 and 95.7 per cent in 1966 (Government of India 2013; MEA 1967). South Asia received 92 per cent of MEA aid from 2005 to 2010 (Tierney et al. 2011), and 82 per cent of its ITEC budget in 2012 (MEA 2013: 210). Indian aid's geographic priorities remain as rooted in its neighborhood today as they were during the height of the Cold War.

The picture becomes less straightforward if lines of credit is counted as foreign aid. A line of credit, typically extended since 2004 by the Exim Bank of India under the government's Indian Development and Economic Assistance Scheme (IDEAS), allows foreign governments, banks, or companies to import 'developmental and infrastructure projects, equipments [sic], goods and services from India, on deferred credit terms' (Exim Bank 2013: 39). Although intended for export promotion, lines of credit have grant components of up to 56.4 per cent (Department of Economic Affairs 2010: 2). Therefore, they can be considered as a special category of aid for the purpose of developing a fuller understanding of India's aid giving.

In March 2013 the Exim Bank had a stock of US$8.6 billion of active lines of credit (Exim Bank 2013: 38), most of which was accumulated over the preceding decade (MEA 2013: 121). Annually, this amounts to slightly under US$1 billion per year, which is approximately the same as the MEA's aid budget in 2012. Although it is not clear from reported statistics what proportion of Exim Bank lines of credit are devoted to IDEAS, one calculation shows that the share of African countries increased from 32 per cent in 2004 to 53 per cent in 2011, while Asia remained at 42 per cent in both periods (Mullen 2013). At the project level, sub-Saharan Africa received 72 per cent of Exim Bank funding in the 2005–10 period, while South Asia received 13 per cent (Tierney et al. 2011)—an almost inverse distribution when compared to the MEA's foreign aid.

Despite the growing importance of sub-Saharan Africa in this category, however, South Asia remains the central focus of the most powerful agency (the MEA) in the Indian government responsible for foreign aid. Moreover, it is certainly not the case that India is only now discovering the importance of the rest of the developing world, which has always been on the Indian aid radar. There are two types of evidence for this claim. The first is the diversity of aid links with developing countries that India maintained during the Cold War. This was particularly true in the realm of technical assistance, following the establishment of the ITEC program, under which in the 1960s alone India deputed experts to and trained officials from South Asian countries as well as Cambodia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Laos, Malaysia, Singapore, Somalia, South Korea, South Vietnam, Tanzania, and Yemen (Dutt 1980). In addition, India contributed to the SCAAP plan launched in 1960, which focused on Africa, thereby also providing experts and training to Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda, Malawi, Zambia, Gambia, Ghana, and Sierra Leone (Dutt 1980). India was also a founding member of the ADB in 1967, providing 9.6

per cent of its initial capital—the third-largest contribution after Japan and the United States, who contributed 20.7 per cent each (ADB 1968).

The second type of evidence lies in the broader context of India's institutional links with the Third World during the Cold War. Starting from the Asian Relations Conference hosted by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in New Delhi in 1947, successive Indian governments assiduously cultivated relationships outside South Asia. Indeed, the evolution of India's international development program is tied to global currents in South–South cooperation that India was a major part of, such as the Bandung Conference of Asian and African nations in 1955, where participating countries agreed to provide technical assistance to one another and lobby for the creation of a special United Nations fund for economic development (which eventually became the UNDP), as well as the International Finance Corporation (Vohra 1980: 66–7). Also relevant were the various summits of the Non-Aligned Movement, the Commonwealth of Nations, and the formation of United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the G-77 grouping of developing countries, of which India was an influential member. India's active participation in the international relations of the Third World ensured that India's foreign aid thinking and activities were global, and they have been so ever since.

The Nature of Indian Aid

Observers and practitioners often make two related claims about the nature of Indian aid. The first is that of all donors, India's aid has been and is most in tune with the needs of recipient countries. For example, India's ambassador to Ghana was quoted in 2013 saying, 'The guiding principle behind India's partnership with West African nations has been that of consultation and neither paternalistic nor purely mercantile. India's development cooperation is undertaken in areas determined by the needs and aspirations of the host countries' (*Ghanaian Chronicle* 2013).

The second claim is that Indian aid is fundamentally different from that of DAC countries because India is at a similar level of development to the world's poor countries, and its aid is non-conditional. According to one analyst:

> On offer is not just aid, but a paradigm that is unique to India ... India's approach to aid is informed by its own experience of development with democracy and growth ... India focuses on smaller interventions, allows recipient countries to define their own priorities and encourages mutual economic growth and long-term trade linkages rather than purely a development impact. (Chanana 2010: 3)

A cursory glance at Indian aid giving from the 1950s onward is sufficient to counter both these statements. In the period when India began its aid program, it focused primarily on building strategic infrastructure in Nepal, Sikkim, and Bhutan. Between 1951 and 1972, almost 53 per cent of the Rs. 902 million India gave to Nepal in assistance was

intended for road building (Vohra 1980: 80). India 'showed no interest in roads unless they connected with the Indian border' (Mihaly 1965: 148). A similar story played out in Bhutan, where the first five-year plan, which was entirely funded by India, spent 61.3 per cent on roads and only 9.9 per cent on education (Belfiglio 1972: 677). Three decades later, the story was similar:

> The needs of the receivers have not determined the road-building undertaken [in South Asia], rather that has been determined by Indian military needs. Thus, in the case of Bhutan, road-building has been concentrated on the north-south roads linking Bhutan with India and enabling the Indian military to outflank Chinese positions. (D.N. 1988: 1263)

In Nepal, one of the first Indian projects was the construction of an airport at Kathmandu, which was built with a runway that was too short for airplanes capable of crossing the Himalayas, i.e. Chinese airplanes, to land on. For a number of years, India also retained control over the functioning of the airport, with telephone calls to the control tower being routed through the Indian Embassy's switchboard (Mihaly 1965: 148). Contracts for major infrastructure projects went to Indian firms, with nearly 75 per cent of the labor employed being Indian (Rana 1971: 157).

This practice foreshadowed India's approach to lines of credit in its contemporary mix of aid to developing countries. Although the Exim Bank itself emphasizes 'the objective of sharing India's development experience' and 'creating socio-economic benefits in the partner country' through lines of credit,[4] the Ministry of Finance clearly spelled out the facility's objectives in a 2010 circular: 'These loans are for importing goods and services and for Project Exports from India. As a rule, goods and services for minimum 75% value of the contracts covered under these loans must be sourced from India' (Department of Economic Affairs 2010: 3).

It is no accident that contemporary Indian foreign aid is as self-interested as it has historically been. Project level data show that almost three-quarters of the US$2 billion committed by the MEA to developing countries in the period 2005–10 was spent on strategic sectors—infrastructure (for energy, water, transport, communications, and industry), budget support to governments, and 'other commodity assistance', largely the purchase of commodities from India (Tierney et al. 2011)—as opposed to sectors such as health, education, and social services.[5] This pattern of aid deployment suggests that whereas post-independence India's interests were influenced by military necessities, contemporary India's interests are economic. Yet, many Indian officials and analysts continue to operate on the belief that their aid is unique in its sensitivity to local need.

This self-perception is not only an Indian trait: as one study has noted, rising powers tend to 'depict their assistance not as the delivery of "aid", but rather as a process of building "development partnership" based on solidarity and mutual respect', which explains the naming of the Development Partnership Administration, the nascent aid division within India's MEA, much along the lines of the South African Development Partnership Agency (Chin and Quadir 2012: 494). India's aid giving is also not unique in

that it mirrors the type of aid India itself received from the great powers during the Cold War. DAC aid following the Second World War was largely focused on infrastructure, agricultural extension, and technical assistance to central administrations. Much of the aid was tied to the import of goods and services from the donor countries, just as India's aid is today (Kragelund 2011: 588–601). Moreover, India's contemporary overall aid priorities are not very different from China's aid priorities in Africa, which are primarily in transportation and storage, energy, and industrial development (Tierney et al. 2011).[6]

Motives Behind Indian Aid

The dominant perception regarding the motives behind Indian aid is that only in the last decade has India begun to see aid as 'an instrument to gain political and economic influence' (Kragelund 2011: 594). Linked to this is a status-based argument, according to which Delhi has begun to see aid 'as a means of positioning India as an emerging power in the eyes of "recipient" nations and other donors' (Price 2013: 2). A similar argument is made with regard to India's regional power ambitions and quest for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council (Agrawal 2007: 3). However, a closer look at history reveals that Indian aid has always been driven by a mix of strategic and prestige-related motives. The change lies not in the arrival of strategic interest, but the increasing importance of global economic integration to India's fortunes as a whole.

There exist numerous commentaries dating back to India's post-independence years that emphasize strategic interest as a clear motive for aid giving. The strongest factor in this regard was China's growing influence in the Third World. Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru made the China factor clear to Parliament in 1950, stating, 'Our interest in the internal conditions of Nepal has become still more acute and personal, because of the developments across our borders, to be frank, especially those in China and Tibet' (Nehru 1950). In a case study of aid politics in 1950s Nepal, an American aid worker wrote: 'India … had fundamentally the same aim in Nepal as the United States: the exclusion of Chinese influence' (Mihaly 1965: 87–8). This was evident in the timing of the expansion of Indian aid to Nepal, which came in 1956 only after the Nepalese Prime Minister returned from a visit to Peking with an offer of US$12.6 million in cash and commodities (Mihaly 1965: 87–8). In the following years, whenever Nepal sought to increase its aid links with China or the West, India would seek to match their contributions. A statistical analysis of foreign aid in Nepal between 1960 and 1990 found Indian aid to be positively and significantly correlated with aid from China, the United States, and Britain, and negatively and significantly correlated with aid from the Soviet Union (Khadka 1997: 1051). A clearer reflection of India's Cold War alliances on its foreign aid giving is hard to come by.

The China factor played a role beyond South Asia as well. Six months after India's defeat in the Sino-Indian War of 1962, the government organized a conference in New Delhi of its heads of mission in South and South-East Asia, followed a few months later

by those in West Asia and Africa. These events were designed to solicit recommendations for improving India's technical and economic cooperation in the respective regions. An inter-ministerial coordination committee, as well as the Cabinet, gave further 'intensive thought' (MEA 1965: 85) to the recommendations from these discussions, resulting in the launch of the ITEC program the following year, which cemented India's aid rivalry with China. In the 1970s and 1980s, as China and Vietnam drifted apart, India ramped up its aid to the latter in a largely successful attempt to cultivate a friend with common interests (Garver 1987: 1206–9).

Following the end of the Cold War, although India has become more capable of competing with China, China itself has pulled much further ahead both economically and in terms of its aid footprint in the developing world—China pledged US$189 billion in aid in 2011 alone (Wolf et al. 2013: 19), compared to the US$15 billion India has pledged via its Development Partnership Administration between 2013 and 2018. Despite this gap, a study of India's aid projects in the developing world between 2008 and 2010 found a positive (but not statistically significant) impact of Chinese aid projects on India's decision to provide aid (Fuchs and Vadlamannati 2013: 121–2). More generally, India's strategic interests have developed an overwhelmingly economic character—exports from India to a country are a reliable predictor of the quantum of Indian aid it will receive (Fuchs and Vadlamannati 2013: 116).

Even economic interest is not truly a new driver of Indian aid. As far back as a few months before independence, at the Asian Relations Conference of 1947, a background Indian paper on inter-Asian trade made the case: 'With the elimination of Japan as the dominant exporter in the Far Eastern markets, and with the unlimited demand of devastated Europe which Britain and US are being called upon to meet, India has a very bright future in Asian markets' (Banerjee 1971: 1168). While deciding its initial financial contribution to the Colombo Plan in 1950, the MEA 'hoped that technical assistance to India to carry out her development plans will be available from other countries partaking in the Colombo Plan ... [and] that through participation in the Plan, India can secure the services of foreign Technical experts and obtain training facilities abroad for Indian technicians' (MEA 1951: 20). Even the so-called contemporary shift toward energy security in India's aid emphasis was present in the 1970s when, in the words of one observer, 'increased stress upon economic self-interest ... led to a reorientation of India's aid emphasis away from South Asia' (Robinson 1983: 297). During these years, India began increasingly seeking economic cooperation with Libya, Iran, and the Gulf states, in order to safeguard oil supplies and win construction contracts in these countries (Robinson 1983: 297).

On the question of prestige as a motivator for India's foreign aid, one can be brief, especially since Nehru's vision for India as the cynosure of the post-colonial Third World is well known. In a speech to the Constituent Assembly of India on January 22, 1947, he spoke of 'this great responsibility that we shoulder ... the responsibility of the leadership of a large part of Asia, the responsibility of being some land of guide to vast numbers of people all over the world'.[7] This sentiment drove much of Indian aid in the decades following independence, and remains an element of India's aid program to this day.

In 1980, one scholar noted that as an aid giver, India did not think of itself as Israel or Norway might. Rather, it considered itself among the ranks of the great powers: 'Foreign aid is a measure of India's place on the world stage, real or imagined. Indian aid is given to remind the world that India is not a weak and supplicant country, but a resurgent and powerful State' (Dutt 1980: 676). More recently, an Indian analyst made an observation that could have been taken straight out of British Foreign Office reports on the Asian Relations Conference of 1947: 'Indians increasingly see the rise of their country as inevitable, and in this new world view [sic] no country is too far to benefit from India's benevolence' (Chanana 2009: 13). Prestige remains an important consideration in India's aid giving, and in India's desire to limit its own reliance on foreign aid. However, what has changed is the rhetoric surrounding Indian aid. For the first decade of the MEA's existence (from 1948 onward), its annual reports referred to aid for the Himalayan kingdoms as 'subsidies to neighbors'. Today, Delhi has transitioned from the language of 'subsidy' and 'assistance' to 'cooperation' and 'partnership'. This rhetorical change likely signals a greater sense of pragmatism in India's relations with the developing world, in keeping with broader transitions in India's foreign policy since the early 1990s.

The Fruits of Indian Aid

What does foreign aid buy for India? If India's goals are strategic, does it obtain political or economic influence through foreign aid? Does it obtain any prestige-related benefits? These questions are difficult to answer given the complex array of variables that influence outcomes in interstate relations. Some of the arguments made in this section therefore require further systematic research.

One might expect two categories of gains from foreign aid for India: economic benefits, and influence. Regarding the former, Indian aid is part of the overall economic diplomacy toolkit, and aid often accompanies trade, investment, market access for Indian firms, and their participation in joint ventures with firms in recipient countries (Chanana 2010: 4). In the case of lines of credit, economic gain is built into the mode of aid disbursement. The challenge, however, lies in separating out the effects of aid from other aspects of economic diplomacy, and in quantifying the exact economic benefit to India once the costs of aid have been factored in. Once an Indian firm obtains market access via the aid channel, it is not clear how long its profits should continue qualifying as a gain from aid. For these reasons, it is difficult to assess whether India 'profits' on the whole from disbursing economic aid or not.

Influence is an even harder variable to measure. In terms of the accepted social-science conception of power, India's influence may arise from its ability to get other countries to do what they otherwise would not. Under this definition, it is not entirely clear that Indian aid has helped achieve very many foreign policy gains. Part of the problem lies in the nature of Indian aid, which—like many other aid programs—has frequently been insensitive to local conditions and needs. Those who argue that India's aid has earned

it 'goodwill and soft power amongst its neighbors' (Mullen 2013: 3) seem to ignore the resentment that Indian power and prosperity (of which aid is a symbol) have bred in its neighborhood. It is unreasonable to expect India, which does things not very differently from other donors, to somehow escape the types of local problems and resentments that other donors also face in recipient countries.

Furthermore, soft power is the power of attraction, which aid by itself cannot produce. The power to attract is distinct from the power to coerce or induce (Nye 2004), the latter being more closely identifiable with foreign aid. Soft power may arise out of cases where the mode of delivery results in foreigners being exposed directly to the culture, institutions, and policies of the donor country. But even here, the assumption that the 40,000 odd alumni of India's ITEC program since 1964 represent 'a large constituency of senior public officials with a friendly disposition toward India' (Agrawal 2007: 9) is questionable. This line of argumentation ignores research in social psychology on predispositions and cognitive biases, as well as the fact that India's culture, institutions, and policies do not always come off well, and that individuals are likely to vary in their receptiveness to these aspects of India's 'attractiveness'. Further micro-level research on how foreign aid impacts India's attractiveness is necessary to validate the assertion that aid produces goodwill and influence for India through recipients' perceptions.

If the attractiveness of Indian aid does not produce influence, perhaps its transactional aspects might do the job. One way of investigating this possibility is to examine whether the dependence of other countries on Indian aid renders them more pliable to Indian interests. For example, is the finding that countries who vote more closely with India in the UN General Assembly receive more Indian aid (Fuchs and Vadlamannati 2013) a sign that aid buys influence or that prior political agreement conditions aid allocations? Further research into the issues on which India's aid recipients vote with India, and at what cost they do so, would help unpack a potentially beneficial outcome of India's aid program.

Despite the shortcomings of the current state of knowledge, one can make three broad observations about aid and India's foreign policy. First, foreign aid is likely to be less effective than other tools of economic diplomacy at creating interdependence between India and recipient countries. The concept of vulnerability interdependence captures the power that states can develop over each other by raising the cost of alternatives to a certain transactional relationship, such as foreign aid (Keohane and Nye 1977). In the ideal scenario, the donor uses aid to secure certain foreign policy interests by meeting the economic needs of the recipient. However, donor interests are likely to be more recipient-specific than recipient needs are donor-specific, particularly if there are other avenues of economic engagement available that do not compromise recipient autonomy. Trade, foreign direct investment, and above all the creation of cross-border production networks—which lock countries into regional or global supply chains that are costly for both parties to substitute—are all likely to be much more effective than aid at creating interdependence (Kapur and Suri 2014).

Second, as with most forms of economic inducement, as long as recipients have sufficient outside options, they will seek to maximize their own political and economic

interests, thereby diminishing India's own gains from the aid relationship. Simply put, the more potential donors, the less influence each one has. In this context, China has since 1947 presented a ready and credible outside option to Indian aid, so much so that India had to initially rely on a system of unequal treaties with Nepal and Bhutan, and direct administrative control over Sikkim, in order to maintain influence over them. In more recent times, China has played the outside option with great effect in Myanmar, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and even Iran and the Central Asian Republics.

Third, aid by its very nature creates an adversarial relationship. Politically, it is the most visible component of another state's power on a nation's soil, and a lightning rod for nationalistic allegations of sovereignty violation and exploitation. Against this backdrop, transforming aid into influence is not just a question of pumping money into foreign countries; it likely also requires a host of policies and initiatives aimed at winning over the leaders and populations of those countries. However, the MEA has not yet shown evidence of effective coordination between its aid and public diplomacy departments. Ultimately, when a diplomatic crisis looms large enough, a pre-existing foreign aid relationship is at best useless, and at worst a hindrance. India's first experience of these realities was in the dramatic cooling of India–Bangladesh relations in 1975—despite large sums of foreign aid from India in the preceding four years—due to the Farraka barrage dispute and regime change in Bangladesh. Similarly, in 2013 India took the extreme step of cutting cooking gas and kerosene supplies to Bhutan (27.6 per cent of whose public revenues come from India) when the latter sought a deeper economic partnership with China; and this during a national election campaign which the sitting government subsequently lost, opening India to accusations of gross interference. The case of the Maldives, where a new government came to power in 2012 and overturned a US$500 million contract for modernizing and operating the capital's airport given to an Indian firm by the previous regime, illustrates the dubious level of influence that Indian aid generally obtains in South Asia. At best, therefore, Indian aid creates some long-term economic ties that benefit Indian firms, and Indian elites obtain some psychological status-related benefits from giving aid to poorer countries in Africa and Asia.

Conclusion

Most analyses of India's foreign aid program tend to emphasize change over continuity. This chapter's purpose has been to provide a historically grounded corrective to this view. India's foreign aid budget has no doubt increased in leaps and bounds since economic liberalization, but many of the motives, features, and outcomes of Indian foreign aid remain the same as they were six decades ago. Change has occurred on two related but distinct fronts. First, India has become a far more self-assured and selective recipient of aid. Second, India's approach to foreign aid has become more pragmatic in tone. In keeping with broader changes in its foreign policy, Delhi has dialed down the

rhetoric of Third World solidarity, Afro-Asian leadership, and assistance to those less fortunate.

This chapter is also intended to remedy the notion that India's aid is somehow special or unique in its ability to satisfy the needs of developing countries. Although Delhi speaks the enlightened language of development and democracy, its foreign aid and other policies have frequently been shaped by a more pragmatic and self-interested logic. Moreover, there are clear parallels between Indian aid giving and earlier DAC aid giving, or the contemporary programs of non-DAC countries. It is entirely possible that these parallels might break down as the newly minted Development Partnership Administration takes off. Until then, policy-makers and analysts would do well to take a longer historical view. This view would also reveal where India currently stands in its trajectory as a rising power. Contrary to the grander imaginings of many observers, India is still regionally preoccupied, struggling with the antinomies of being both a developing country and an influential world power. The sooner India is able to come to terms with where it stands in relation to other countries and in relation to its past, the more effective it will be at developing a coherent philosophical framework for its aid programs that might lead to real foreign policy gains.[8]

Notes

1. This is Official Development Assistance (ODA) as defined by the OECD. Although foreign aid may be interpreted more broadly to include items such as military aid, in this chapter it is used to mean ODA.
2. Calculated from the MEA's annual Demands for Grants. Dollar figure based on average weekly exchange rate for 2012.
3. In 2012, this figure increased to 0.055 per cent but with the exception of 1972, the overall trend has been flat.
4. Exim Bank website: <http://www.eximbankindia.in/?q=loc>.
5. This calculation excludes multi-sector, unallocated/unspecified, and 'other' projects. Including these categories reduces the share of strategic sectors to 69 per cent.
6. Each of these sectors receives less funding than unallocated/unspecified or multi-sector projects, but they are nonetheless the three most funded single-sector project areas.
7. Accessed online at <http://parliamentofindia.nic.in/ls/debates/vol2p3.htm>.
8. The author is grateful to Andreas Fuchs and Devesh Kapur for comments on a previous draft of this chapter.

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CHAPTER 14

INDIA'S SOFT POWER

RANI D. MULLEN

ANECDOTAL evidence of the popularity of Bollywood and, indeed, of wider Indian culture in Afghanistan abounds. In addition, two international surveys in Afghanistan indicate that India is the most popular foreign country there—all of this without much Indian hard power on display in the country. How does one explain India's popularity in Afghanistan? A complete answer to this question has to consider Indian soft power.

Indian foreign policy is increasingly drawing on a perception of its rising soft power—the power to entice, influence, and attract other governments and populations globally. If effective, it should make global partners more open to Indian views and interests. However, significant domestic impediments remain to cementing India's fragile gains in leveraging its soft power on the global stage. Its assets on this front include its ancient and distinct cultural heritage, the Bollywood film industry, and its status as the world's largest democracy, albeit one that is developing and changing rapidly. The government's increasing foreign assistance and public diplomacy programs are soft power instruments. It nevertheless remains unclear whether New Delhi can translate these assets into increasing the influence of India in policy circles internationally and among the broader international publics. For this to happen, India must design and resource coherent strategies for promoting its soft power abroad at the same time as it addresses domestic challenges that reflect little credit on it internationally.

Two recent events illustrate a tension between India's soft power potential and its domestic impediments. The first, in December 2012, was the horrific rape and murder of a young Indian woman in Delhi. In the aftermath of this globally-reported incident, tourism to India dropped—especially among young women—as the governments of several countries cautioned their citizens against traveling to India. Surveys also showed a drop in global perceptions of India between 2012 and 2013 (Khout et al. 2012: 17; BBC World Service Poll 2013). The dichotomy between an economically 'rising India' and continued reports of widespread personal insecurity and violence faced by the average Indian citizen, and women in particular, was stark.

The second event was the December 2013 election in the nation's capital, Delhi, which brought to power an entirely new political force, the Aam Aadmi (Common Man's)

Party, whose campaign had focused on fighting corruption. The party had grown within two years from a protest movement to a political phenomenon that registered support from all classes, winning votes in Delhi's slums as well as wealthy neighborhoods (Srinivasan 2013). Although the first such Aam Aadmi government in Delhi was short-lived, its emergence highlighted another contradiction within India's soft power: that of vibrant democracy sustained in a developing country with the world's largest concentration of poor people. This improbable political victory adds to India's power of attraction.

The history of India's global appeal is a long and rich one. Before independence, global icons including Mahatma Gandhi and his philosophy of non-violence, Nobel Prize winner (for literature in 1913) Rabindranath Tagore, and a bevy of others kept India in the global public eye and imagination. The appeal of India's burgeoning Bollywood film industry soon was second only to that of Hollywood. Its foreign policy championed anti-colonial independence movements and creatively endeavored to forge and navigate a third way between the two Cold War superpowers.

Soft power depends not only on cultural attractions, political values, and a legitimate foreign policy, but also on the appeal of a country's political and economic record. However, India's closed economy, slow economic growth rate through the 1980s, its mediocre record in improving human development indicators, and its limited global political ambitions also meant that resources to highlight India's appeal remained limited and its soft power assets untapped. The Indian political economy did not command global admiration until economic liberalization in the early 1990s led to higher growth rates and greater integration into the global economy.

This chapter examines how Indian foreign policy has sought to promote its influence through soft power and discusses some challenges it faces in doing so. First, it applies to the Indian context the theoretical framework of 'soft power' laid out by the author of the term, Joseph S. Nye Jr. Second, it examines how India's soft power has been promoted through its foreign policy since independence. Third, it analyzes the tools Indian foreign policy has used to disseminate the three attributes of its soft power: its culture, political values, and approach to foreign policy. The chapter concludes by assessing India's evolving soft power appeal, as measured by international public opinion surveys as well as composite measures of Indian soft power.

Soft Power in the Indian Context

Over the past few years there has been increasing discussion about India and its 'soft power' (Wagner 2010; Mullen and Ganguly 2012; *The Economist* 2013) although the term is often used loosely. State power, according to Nye, is the ability to influence the behavior of other states in order to secure desired outcomes (Nye 2004). A state can coerce other states with force, threats, and bribes, or induce consent. Nye coined the term 'soft power' in 1990 to describe the ability of a country to attract and persuade other countries

to want what it wants instead of using 'hard power', i.e. coercion or payment (Nye 1990). According to Nye, a country's soft power rests on three main resources: 'its culture (in places where it is attractive to others), its political values (when it lives up to them at home and abroad), and its foreign policies (when others see them as legitimate and having moral authority)' (Nye 2011: 84).

Soft power thus can influence the preferences and behavior of other states through seduction. Moreover, with the diffusion of power and the rising power of non-state actors in the twenty-first century, the use of hard power for economic and even geostrategic gain is often too costly relative to the anticipated gains. A vibrant and open culture, values such as democracy, respect for human rights, guarantees of a free press, and a foreign policy seen as just are factors that are deeply seductive. However, soft power is largely intangible and hard to shape by the policies of governments. Soft power resources often lie beyond the control of governments and perform their magic indirectly, often taking years to bolster a country's image (Nye 2004; Codevilla 2008).

India's soft power resources have changed dramatically over the past 25 years, particularly since the turn of the century. India has a very old culture, hosted several of the world's oldest civilizations, is the birthplace of Hinduism and Buddhism, the home of yoga and of approaches to alternative medicines, contributed the idea of 'zero' and the decimal system to mathematics, and has made large contributions to other sciences, including astronomy, but these achievements were unharnessed. More recently, Bollywood has risen to produce more movies than any other country in the world and has the highest number of theater admissions, as well as ranking among the top ten countries in terms of box office revenue in US dollars (UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2013). Today India's culture also includes its rising status as the largest global service-outsourcing provider involving back-offices, call centers, and the development of advanced related information technology (Sourcing Line 2014). People of Indian origin have risen to prominence, winning Nobel Prizes and numerous literary awards (particularly in the last 30 years), heading major multinational companies, and spearheading scientific breakthroughs.

Similarly, India's democratic political values, which survived an eighteen-month suspension of democracy under Indira Gandhi in the 1970s, are globally attractive. India's democracy is the largest in the world and has endured despite the country's lower-middle income status. Indeed, India's ability to sustain democracy in spite of its economic limitations is particularly impressive to other developing countries which often find the political models of the industrialized countries remote due to their wealth. Persistent poverty, malnutrition, and low literacy rates have coexisted with a relatively free press, a factor that likely prevented post-independence India from experiencing massive famine as did the authoritarian People's Republic of China as a result of the 'Great Leap Forward' of 1958–61 (Sen 1999). In addition to national and state elections, India has held local government elections for the past two decades and boasts an average electoral turnout at national elections since 1952 of around 60 per cent. Indian democracy is not only enduring against the tremendous odds of poverty, illiteracy, and malnutrition, but also renewing itself constantly (as the rise of the Aam Aadmi Party and the

shifting sands of regional politics demonstrate). Its endurance as a fractiously democratic political state bolsters India's soft power resources.

The size and growth of India's economy and its standing as a consolidated democracy has provided it with the status of a role model for other developing countries; a role model that differs from the East Asian developmental states model under authoritarian leadership. That such economic progress has been possible in democratic India and through peaceful, ballot box-modulated means undoubtedly adds to India's soft power allure.

India's development paradigm is also often seen as a more relevant model for political and economic development in other similar countries than that of countries such as the United States. India's economic growth rates, despite a slowdown in 2013–14, have averaged over 6 per cent since 2000 (Planning Commission of the Government of India 2013a). Although India still harbors the world's largest concentration of poor, it has substantially decreased its poverty rates over the past two decades in particular (Planning Commission of the Government of India 2013b). Two decades ago, Pakistan's social and economic indicators were comparable to or surpassed those of India. The situation was reversed by 2014, eliciting admiration from a former head of Pakistan's central bank (Husain 2012). In private conversations, officials from Afghanistan, Ethiopia, and Vietnam (which all receive development assistance from both India and the United States) have stated that India's method of engagement as a 'development partner', along with India's more similar development trajectory, often makes Indian development assistance more attractive than that of the United States.

Foreign policy has also formed part of India's soft power appeal. Indian foreign policy, in the decades after independence, sought to forge a policy that navigated between the two Cold War superpowers, co-founding the Non-Aligned Movement and becoming a founding member of the United Nations. Though Indian foreign policy by the 1970s was more closely aligned with the Soviet Union, from which it subsequently procured much of its military hardware, it remained active in trying to articulate a policy separate from that of either superpower.

Since the end of the Cold War and the opening of the Indian economy in the early 1990s, Indian foreign policy has sought to bolster its growing regional and global power ambitions, while at the same time advocating for the views of developing countries in international forums such as the G-20. At the same time, India's caution in promoting its democratic values in bilateral relationships with non-democratic countries (Malone 2011: 39) and indeed at times its pursuit of self-interest over democracy-promotion and a general lack of a coherent vision of soft power promotion in its foreign policy formulation, has often hampered its exercise of soft power (Mukherjee 2013: 13).

Shashi Tharoor, a former UN Under-Secretary General and an India Minister of State, highlights that India is fast rising not just through the traditional avenues of trade and politics, but also because of its soft power: 'In today's world it's not the side with the bigger army that wins, it's the country that tells a better story that prevails' (Tharoor 2009). Others have argued that Indian foreign policy should not mimic that of the established middle- and higher-income powers, but rather should build on its substantial soft

power potential and resources (Abraham 2007). Indeed, some have proposed that India may be an exemplar of soft power, one that is not merely 'masquerading as a Western nation' in a world of increased multipolarity, but one that is contributing to an increased sense of global interpolarity (Dellios and Ferguson 2011).

The Promotion of India's Soft Power in Its Foreign Policy

While culture, values, and government policies are the resources of soft power, a country's foreign policy can be both a soft power resource as well as an instrument for leveraging soft power. Public diplomacy, through strategic communication in foreign countries, building of development partnerships, and construction of enduring relationships with policy-makers through training, scholarships, and other capacity-building tools, can help create an attractive image of a country abroad, improving its prospects for attaining preferred policy outcomes (Nye 2008: 102).

India has a long history of engaging in public diplomacy in order to try to leverage its soft power. Post-independence, Indian Prime Minister Nehru quickly adopted a soft power strategy to foreign policy, by focusing on establishing a distinct voice for post-colonial, developing countries. Nehru's personal sense of moral import in public diplomacy and his preferred use of soft power over hard power shaped the nature of India's early foreign policy (Kennedy 2012). India, in the 1950s and 1960s, already projected a foreign policy that traded in soft power, emphasizing self-determination, development, and partnerships. By being a founding member of the Non-Aligned Movement, supporting independence movements in the African continent in particular, and engaging in development partnerships with others at a time when it was itself still recovering from the wounds of partition, India introduced soft power instruments into its foreign policy. Even after the humiliating defeat in the 1962 Sino-Indian war, India stayed the course by focusing on 'lightly armed non-alignment' (Gould 2008: 131), hoping that patient adherence to soft power might bear fruit (Hymans 2009).

Under Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in the 1970s and then her son Rajiv Gandhi in the mid-1980s Indian foreign policy turned more authoritarian, at times more directly applying hard power, though usually only after public diplomacy failed. For example, during the lead-up to the 1971 war with Pakistan, a crisis during which 10 million refugees poured into India from East Pakistan, India accepted them despite the enormous cost. It engaged in extensive international advocacy of an autonomous or independent Bangladesh (Raghavan 2013: 206). Only after it became clear that public diplomacy was failing to achieve the favored result, did the Indian government go the route of hard war with Pakistan. Yet even though India's soft power instruments with the United States did not work in this case (Hymans 2009: 251), Indian leadership among other developing countries started to pay off.

Countries in its neighborhood and in Africa started to engage more closely in development partnerships with India.

Enhanced Engagement in the Tools of Public Diplomacy to Foster India's Soft Power

Development Cooperation

By the twenty-first century, Indian foreign policy sought to burnish its image through a more active engagement with the tools of public diplomacy. Indian politicians, civil servants, and key policy analysts increasingly talked about India's soft power and sought ways of more vigorously enhancing India's image abroad. A rising recognition of the role of media in an increasingly digitally connected world shaped Delhi's approach.

India's development partnership program perhaps best exemplified India's soft power approach to public diplomacy in the post-independence period. Eschewing the Western term 'foreign aid' with its implication of hierarchy, India navigated a path that was largely devoid of the ideological rhetoric that characterized the foreign aid approach of both Cold War camps. Instead, Indian 'development partnerships', even with its smaller neighbors, set a tone of collaboration between developing countries many of which were emerging from the yoke of colonialism.

Celebrating Burmese independence in 1948 Prime Minister Nehru stated: 'As in the past, so in the future, the people of India will stand shoulder to shoulder with the people of Burma and whether we have to share good fortune or ill fortune, we shall share it together' (Aung and Myint 2001: 89). When Burma urgently needed cash in 1949, just two years after India's own independence, to meet its balance of payments and to address an insurgency, Prime Minister Nehru organized a meeting of Commonwealth country representatives and contributed 1 million British pounds out of a total of 6 million pounds lent to the Burmese government under concessional terms.

Yet since the early 1990s, India's increased engagement with Burma's military junta in order to counter what was seen as increasing Chinese influence in the region, and particularly India's silence during the 2007 democratic, anti-government uprising, has been widely criticized both within India and abroad (Malone 2011: 38), even earning it a rebuke by Burmese opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi during her 2012 visit to Delhi. India's foreign policy towards Burma failed to emphasize the importance of a return to democracy and India's long-standing personal ties with Ms. Suu Kyi at the cost of its moral standing and with little benefit to show in return.

Similarly, India gave significant foreign assistance to Nepal starting in the 1950s mostly for infrastructure projects, including the building of the airport in Kathmandu

(Trivedi 2008). Indian development cooperation with its neighbors was promoted as helping its brothers, in contrast to the image of foreign aid from traditional donors as being a handout. However, India's imposition of an unequal treaty on Nepal, governing the overall relationship, significantly undermined its popularity and soft power in that neighboring country. India's focus on realpolitik in its relations with Burma and Nepal highlights the larger cost that such a foreign policy can have on India's power of attraction.

By contrast, investment by India in development partnerships has paid handsome dividends in the form of desired foreign policy outcomes. In the Indo-Ethiopian relationship both countries have benefited, with India lending support to Ethiopia's development efforts and Ethiopia supporting India's ambition of attaining a seat on the United Nations Security Council. Similarly, India in 2012–13 allocated over 2,000 study and training fellowships to Afghanistan, the second largest recipient of Indian aid after Bhutan, training a generation of civil servants and potential policy-makers. The fact that Hamid Karzai, Afghanistan's President until 2014, studied in India and gave press conferences in Delhi where he joked with the local press in Hindi, undoubtedly also enabled India to secure a close relationship with Afghanistan and an official strategic partnership, without having to flex a hard power muscle.

Beyond individual relationships with countries, the more than quadrupling of India's budget for development partnerships in the dozen years between 2002–3 and 2014–15 has meant that Indian development cooperation today plays a much more significant role globally. Through grants, lines of credit, and technical assistance and training in India, Indian development cooperation has expanded both well beyond its regional neighbors and in types of development cooperation instruments, contributing to India's image as a growing global power and cementing its soft power (see Rohan Mukherjee's chapter in this volume on Indian aid).

In a shrewd move, smacking of tables turned, Indian assistance has also been used strategically to enhance its global power ambitions vis-à-vis developed countries. In 2012 India pledged $10 billion to the International Monetary Fund's line of defense for the southern European countries in financial crisis, a strategic move that lent additional credibility to India's image as a ready and giving development partner, as well as giving it the moral underpinning to its request for greater voting share rights in the Fund's management (Mullen 2012).

Public Diplomacy

While capacity deficits continue to plague the government's ability to maximize the strategic leverage of India's foreign policy engagement, India has invested substantial resources in old and new public diplomacy tools to leverage its soft power. This increased attention to building public diplomacy capacity is largely driven by the rise of China and wanting to differentiate its foreign policy from that of its neighbor to the north (Hall 2012). It is also driven by a widespread sense within the Ministry of External

Affairs, and policy analysts, that the perception of India in its neighborhood is not as healthy as it could and should be (Wagner 2005: 12–13). In addition to allocating more resources and centralizing management of its development cooperation, India's recent public diplomacy efforts have entailed creating a new government division dedicated to public diplomacy, reaching out to overseas Indians, building links with foreign business interests, and increasing the outreach of established diplomacy organizations such as the Indian Council for Cultural Relations. This institution was created shortly after independence to promote cultural and academic exchanges, with a budget that increased between 2008–9 and 2013–14 from 850 million rupees (then roughly US$17 million) to 1.6 billion rupees (US$26 million at the exchange rate in 2014). In addition, the Indian Council of World Affairs, an organization created before India's independence as a quasi-independent think-tank, today takes on a more official role in promoting 'India's relations with other countries through study, research, discussion, lectures and exchange of ideas and information with other organizations within and outside India engaged in similar activities' (Ministry of Law, Justice and Company Affairs 2001: 5). Its budget more than doubled between 2008 and 2009 to 100 million rupees ($1.6 million dollars) (Ministry of Law, Justice and Company Affairs 2001: 5).

Leading the media outreach to promote Indian soft power was the creation in 2006 of a new Public Diplomacy Division (PDD) within its Ministry of External Affairs in order to 'influence public attitudes in a manner that they become supportive of its foreign policy and national interests' (Ministry of External Affairs, Public Diplomacy Division, Government of India). The PDD has engaged in traditional mediums of organizing conferences and workshops on public diplomacy. It also engaged in new media, creating a new website in 2010 designed to disseminate its public diplomacy efforts through links to lectures, videos of speeches and meetings, and publication of a bi-monthly magazine on India's culture and traditions which is available in 162 countries in 17 languages. The PDD website also uses social media tools such as Twitter, a dedicated Facebook site, YouTube videos, and the publication website 'issuu' to reach out to the younger generation and better market itself. And it has also organized outreach activities, produced books and films to disseminate Indian soft power through Indian embassies and high commissions, and partnered with universities, research institutes, and think-tanks in India and abroad. By 2013/14, the Indian government had allocated 240 million rupees (US$4 million) to this new division.

In a turn from the Nehruvian policy which neglected India's diaspora, often explicitly telling foreigners of Indian extraction that they were citizens of their new country and not of India, the Indian government created a new Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA) in 2004. India has a diaspora of 25 million, the second largest in the world. In recognition of the large flow of remittances by the diaspora to India, the important bridge that India's diaspora plays in helping India access local knowledge, expertise, and markets for India's development (Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs 2014), India set out to court its once neglected diaspora to further its image abroad. New categories were created amongst its diaspora in 2006: Non-Resident Indians (NRIs), Persons of Indian Origin, and Overseas Citizen of India (OCI). Their access to and engagement with India

was facilitated by giving permanent visas for entry into India and increasing outreach to them by the new ministry. As of May 2013 over 1.3 million OCI 'booklets' (essentially identity documents) had been issued by the Government of India (Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs 2015).

The new ministry also arranged several new institutional linkages to tap into the human resources, overseas employment possibilities, and philanthropic potential of its diaspora. It created a Prime Minister's Global Advisory Council to draw upon the most talented among the diaspora and to use their expertise, restructured an older non-profit organization into the new India Center for Migration in order to conduct research related to overseas Indian workers and employment markets, created, together with the Confederation of Indian Industry, the non-profit Overseas Indian Facilitation Center to facilitate the diaspora's economic engagement and investment, and established the non-profit India Development Foundation to facilitate diaspora philanthropy and social investment in India (Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs 2013: 9). Similar to the new MEA Public Diplomacy Division's use of the internet to facilitate outreach, the MOIA website set up a helpline, newsletter, and other tools to connect better with its diaspora.

The growth in outreach activities to the Indian diaspora since 2004 is reflected in the budget of the MOIA, which grew from 70 million rupees in 2004–5 to a budget of 1.16 billion rupees in 2013–14 (Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs 2013: 59). The majority of expenditure going towards public relations and outreach, including seminars and conferences such as the annual Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (Day of Indians Abroad), which is organized in conjunction with the Confederation of Indian Industry. Altogether these efforts illustrate a concerted effort by the Government of India to publicize India as a place welcoming of its diaspora and seeking to leverage their talents and resources to facilitate Indian development. They also represent an effort by the Indian government to access resources, build markets, and develop relations with the countries in which their diaspora live (Rana 2009). (For a fuller discussion on these matters, see Latha Varadarajan's chapter in this volume on the role of the diaspora in India's foreign policy.)

The public diplomacy outreach was not limited to engaging its diaspora, as efforts have extended to the building of economic links abroad as well. India's development cooperation efforts with their focus on 'mutually beneficial' partnerships already straddle the aid/trade promotion divide. Some of India's development partnerships more explicitly further economic links abroad, such as India's support for building port infrastructure in Iran and railroads and road linkages from the port and the Iranian–Afghan border to Bamiyan province where a consortium of Indian public and private companies have won the rights to mine iron ore. Other development efforts such as the Pan-African e-Network have explicitly sought to increase India's soft power abroad while using telecommunications infrastructure to provide 'tele-medicine' and 'tele-education', thereby also creating overseas markets for Indian goods and services. India's public diplomacy efforts have also included outreach to developed countries, by running an international 'Incredible India' tourism campaign, establishing business councils and chambers of commerce, and hosting international exhibitions to brand India, all in order to court business investment as well as market India's image abroad.

In sum, the strategic culture of Indian public diplomacy has changed, particularly since the turn of the twenty-first century. Indian policy-makers and civil servants are not only increasingly aware of India's soft power allure abroad, but successive Indian governments have also been more strategic in devoting greater resources and harnessing new media instruments to buff India's soft power allure abroad.

Assessing India's Soft Power

Unlike taking inventory of guns, tanks, and other military equipment and personnel to measure hard power influence, soft power and the ability of soft power to induce diplomatic gains is notoriously difficult to measure. Building on Nye's idea that in today's information age it is the country that tells the better story that wins global appeal, Indian politician Shashi Tharoor opined that India has an extraordinary ability to tell more persuasive and attractive stories than those of its rivals (Tharoor 2009). Yet assessing whether India has been telling a more appealing story and gaining favorable foreign policy outcomes in quantifiable ways is difficult in itself. The outcomes of soft power are difficult to disentangle from the relationships between agents and subjects, which themselves are often the objectives of soft power action (Hayden 2012: 60). Any attempt at such measure is also highly dependent on who is being asked and timing considerations.

There are a few international public opinion surveys that attempt to capture global attitudes towards countries including India. The soft power ranking by the British magazine *Monocle* and the British Institute for Government, a UK non-governmental organization that aims to improve government effectiveness, is notable among these surveys because it specifically constructs an annual soft power index and ranks countries according to their soft power. Of the countries ranked since 2010, India has shown up near the bottom of the 20–30 countries covered under the headings of business innovation, culture, government efficacy, diplomacy, and education (McClory 2010–12). Yet the methodology of this ranking, which includes measures such as the number of languages spoken by the head of government (based on in-house analysis and an UK-based expert panel), belied the difficulties in devising a culturally unbiased ranking of a country's soft power.

The Pew Global Attitudes Survey has measured public opinion of select countries towards each other. For India it has since 2006 surveyed whether public opinion in China, Pakistan, and Japan is favorable towards India. Favorable attitudes towards India in China and Pakistan have decreased over the six years of surveys between 2006 and 2013 (from 33 per cent down to 23 and 22 per cent respectively), while favorable opinions of India have risen in Japan from 65 to 70 per cent. Another global opinion survey, World Public Opinion, an online publication and resource for public opinion on international issues, in 2013 showed a dramatic overall fall in world public opinion of India from mainly positive in 2012 to more negative than positive in 2013 (BBC World Service Poll 2013). Yet here again, whether this survey is a true measure of 'global' public opinion or

indeed the countries that Indian foreign policy mostly engages with is doubtful. Hardly any countries in Africa or Asia are included in the survey, nor any of India's immediate neighbors who receive the bulk of Indian grant aid (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka). Moreover, when one analyzes the opinions towards India in those African countries where the survey was conducted, opinion is largely positive. In general, public opinion surveys seem to indicate that India's global allure is mixed, depending on the country being polled and the time of polling.

Analyzing India's longer-term soft power leverage by attempting to survey global public opinion is not only questionable as a result of methodological quandaries, but also because public opinion is clearly driven in large part by recent news stories, leading to undue volatility in responses. The December 2012 Indian rape case outlined at the outset of this chapter most certainly impacted global public opinion of India in 2013. The less widely reported rise of the new anti-corruption Aam Aadmi party also likely had an impact on global understanding of India's complexity but less so, as it lacked shock value.

India's soft power is perhaps better assessed through country-specific analyses and surveys, yet very few such surveys exist. One exception, noted in this chapter's introduction, would be Afghanistan, where India has invested significant soft power resources since the early part of the twenty-first century and where positive perceptions of India are preponderant. Favorable opinion of India extends well beyond Afghanistan's political elites. A survey conducted by ABC, ARD, and BBC news agencies in 2009 and 2010 found that Afghans had the most favorable opinion of Indians out of the countries respondents were asked to rate, and the least favorable opinion of Pakistan (Afghan Center for Socio-Economic and Opinion Research et al. 2010: 22).

Conclusion

Overall, the limited evidence suggests that India has soft power attraction abroad, particularly among developing countries where it has made a significant effort to burnish its partnership image. Indian soft power is no longer just about Bollywood, yoga, or global icons like Mahatma Gandhi. India's own identity as a developing country with an entrenched democracy and rising economic growth rates makes it an increasingly attractive development paradigm for other developing countries. Efforts to increase India's development partnerships in scope and funding, together with public diplomacy outreach have certainly helped India to bolster its global appeal, as the case of Afghanistan illustrates.

Yet despite the rise of India as a global actor, its foreign policy engagement in the twenty-first century has at times lacked policy coherence and efficacy, as the sacrificing of democratic solidarity for a realpolitik which failed to realize strategic gains in Burma illustrates. Moreover, in the second decade of the twenty-first century, significant capacity constraints remain particularly within the Ministry of External Affairs. These constraints have often led to foreign policy engagements, including in development

partnerships, that are reactive instead of strategic and pro-active. In addition, soft power is more intangible than hard power and more susceptible to sways in public opinion. Addressing those constraints to Indian soft power growth are within the realm of the government and will remain key to bolstering India's soft power in the future.

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PART III

INSTITUTIONS AND ACTORS

CHAPTER 15

STATE AND POLITICS

PAUL STANILAND AND VIPIN NARANG

In this chapter we argue that India's state and domestic politics have important effects on India's foreign policy. Indian democracy and bureaucracy shape how political leaders deal with the international environment. Foreign policy is certainly an issue that the Indian public—especially its urban middle class—has preferences about, but it is often not a major electoral issue or the focus of politicians' effort. Instead, coalitions, identity politics, and battles over redistribution and dignity dominate how citizens vote and how governments come to power.

This means that Indian democracy does not create consistent or clear electoral pressures on politicians to devote effort to foreign policy. While some high-level politicians—especially the prime minister—take foreign policy issues seriously, most powerful elected officials devote their time and expertise to domestic issues. There are definite exceptions to this pattern, but most of the time general and state elections are not decided by politicians' positions on issues of alliances, grand strategy, or international prominence. The regionalization of Indian politics has accelerated this trend, while also allowing state governments to sometimes have a voice in foreign policy issues—often at odds with the wishes of the center.

This political context has contributed to the endurance of a relatively powerful bureaucracy in defense and foreign affairs. Unlike other Indian bureaucracies, which have been deeply politicized by politicians to meet electoral needs, the broadly low electoral salience of foreign policy has allowed bureaucrats and the military to carve out substantial autonomy. Yet this autonomy comes at a price: it encourages organizational myopia and leaves public servants exposed, because of the lack of powerful political patrons, if something goes wrong. While the pathology of institutional hollowing and politicization that afflicts other parts of the Indian state has not occurred, accountability, responsiveness, and efficiency remain limited. Resource limitations, though changing in recent years, have also resulted from the dominant focus on domestic political issues.

This chapter outlines the key aspects of domestic politics that affect foreign policy in India, their effects on outcomes, and the prospects of change in the future.

Elections and the Polity

India is famously the world's largest democracy. Vast attention has been paid to the possible effects of democracy on international behavior (Russett and Oneal 2001; Reiter and Stam 2002; Downes 2009), but it is not clear that India fits neatly into existing arguments. There are several aspects of Indian democracy that can affect foreign policy by shaping the power and incentives of politicians. As we will suggest, their relationship to foreign policy is often complex, ambiguous, and contingent: Indian voters face a number of important issues, of which foreign policy is only one, and the regionalization of politics has complicated central coalition making and increased the clout of state parties at the expense of central coherence. These dynamics have some potential benefits for Indian democracy, especially in empowering new social formations and broadening democratic participation, but they can actually undermine consistent linkages between foreign policy performance, individual vote choices, and patterns of political power in Delhi.

Voting

Voting turnout in India is relatively high and elections are objects of huge effort, resources, and attention. Most voters in India are poor and rural (Kapur 2009), though urbanization is occurring with some rapidity. What do these voters vote on, and what issues do politicians use to appeal them? The answers to these questions are incredibly diverse, but it is clear that most of the time foreign policy issues are not on the list. There are exceptions—periods of intense crisis like the run-up to the 1971 war (Raghavan 2013) or regional concerns like migration from Bangladesh for Assam and ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka for Tamil Nadu.

In general, however, the bread-and-butter of foreign security policy—weapons development and acquisition, alliances, international institutions, military and diplomatic strategy—are simply not major campaign issues. Devesh Kapur's (2009) surveys consistently show that foreign policy is not a very salient issue for the electorate compared to day-to-day concerns such as local corruption and food and gas prices. Part of this is because many Indian voters have relatively little information about high politics, and part of it is because they face pressing daily challenges that more directly demand their attention. For many voters, foreign policy is a concern but not their dominant focus in making demands on the state (Chandra 2004; Kruks-Wisner 2013).

Accountability

Even in cases where the electorate might be sufficiently motivated by foreign policy issues to reward or punish India's leaders for their foreign policy performance, the

voting procedures and structure of Indian democracy make it difficult for the electorate to do so (Staniland and Narang 2014). First, India's parliamentary structure is such that any particular Lok Sabha member is accountable to only, at most, 2,500,000 voters. There is thus no national referendum on India's Prime Minister, let alone his or her foreign or defense minister as in presidential systems or other parliamentary systems that incorporate proportional representation into their electoral rules. Second, India's apex leaders are often selected into safe districts, or run in multiple districts as a hedge, which makes punishing them for foreign policy mistakes extremely rare and difficult. Third, given that a ruling government can decide when to call national elections, it can do so at an opportune moment that increases the distance from foreign policy mistakes or exploits a major foreign policy victory if it thinks it can reap a rally-around-the flag effect.

These three features of India's political structure make accountability for foreign policy performance very complicated. This does not mean that foreign policy cannot be an election issue or that politicians are totally unconcerned about the shadow of voting; there are clearly cases—whether in 1970–1 (Raghavan 2013) or 2008 (Chaudhuri 2014)—in which Prime Ministers and other elected officials have been concerned about the domestic politics of foreign policy decisions. But the tight, consistent link between foreign policy and electoral outcomes is missing: ruling governments have numerous resources at their disposal to try to delay, defuse, or weaken accountability, ranging from Cabinet shuffles to finding new coalition partners to holding off on elections. These are not unique dynamics to India; to some extent, accountability and representation are necessarily limited in all democracies. But in India the complexity and size of the political system and the bureaucracy create substantial challenges, especially, as we discuss next, in the face of coalition government and the regionalization of politics.

Coalitions

These problems of accountability have been exacerbated by the growth in coalition government. Since 1989, elections and voting have grown even more complicated with the advent of national coalition governments (Ziegfeld 2012). The rise of regional parties, from south India during linguistic mobilization in the 1950s and 1960s to West Bengal in the 1960s to north India with the rise of the Samajwadi Party (SP) and Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) in the 1980s and 1990s, has meant that apex national parties can no longer rule in Delhi alone. Regional parties mobilize a variety of different political cleavages, most commonly language and caste, and have become the key players in a number of states.

This marks a major break from the era of Congress dominance. Though Nehru, Indira Gandhi, and Rajiv Gandhi never ruled unchallenged by intra-party factionalism or opposition parties, they nevertheless had a major hand and role in the formulation and execution of foreign and defense policy. When they wanted to, they could bring substantial attention and clout to bear, for better and worse, since they enjoyed outright majorities in Parliament that insulated them from parliamentary action against them.

In the wake of regionalization, however, coalition management has become an overwhelming challenge and priority for the Indian National Congress (INC) and the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP). These regional parties tend not to stake their claims to power on foreign policy, even less so than the national parties (though the Communist Party Marxist (CPM) in West Bengal is an important, highly unusual, exception; and the Dravida Munnettra Kazhagam (DMK) and All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) with respect to the very narrow issue of foreign policy toward Sri Lanka). Instead, for their support, these regional parties often demand extractions such as lucrative ministries and redistribution toward their states. Most, save the exceptions noted above, know or care very little about foreign policy. This disinterest was in full display in the parliamentary vote in 2008 on the so-called India–US nuclear deal in which the ruling Congress government secured support of key parties such as the SP not through the merits of the arguments in favor of the deal, but largely through financial inducements. Relatedly, in a crowded issue space that had already made foreign policy the purview of elites and the few leaders who cared, coalition politics has even further crowded the issue space and made foreign policy even less relevant to India's policy space since it carries few rewards and mostly risks as the INC or BJP attempt to cohere fickle coalition partners.

Coalition politics has made accountability for ruling governments on foreign policy even more difficult for two reasons. First, as regional parties have displaced the BJP and INC in key states across India, it is difficult for voters in many states to hold even the major national parties responsible for foreign policy successes and failures since the BJP and INC may not even be realistically competitive in many constituencies relative to the regional party. Second, the ability of regional parties to switch on a whim from the INC to the BJP makes even holding the regional party candidate responsible for national foreign policy performance very difficult.

State Governments and Federalism

While regional parties have not consistently taken stands on national policy issues, they have been more influential at the state level, further complicating the policy process. Two examples suggest the ways that regionalization can affect foreign policy.

The first is related to the politics of India's stance toward Sri Lanka. Tamil regional parties in Tamil Nadu—both the AIADMK and the DMK—have at times used the Tamil ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka as an electoral issue. Though opportunism in these politicians' deployment of the rhetoric of Tamil grievance is often apparent, there is no doubt that this issue can be an important one in shaping how Tamil politicians make demands on the center. Central governments that rely on these parties in national coalitions or that fear the political costs of large-scale protests in Tamil Nadu have had to at least pay some degree of heed to their demands for more aggressive Indian action. These demands reached their fullest form in the 1980s, when Sri Lankan Tamil armed groups received sanctuary and support in India. They were attenuated after the Indian Peace

Keeping Force (IPKF) debacle and Rajiv Gandhi's assassination, but when the war in Sri Lanka flared into its brutal climax in 2006–9, the Tamil issue once again became a political flashpoint. This contributed to the complex Indian policy stance, which combined rhetorical concerns about human rights violations and allowing Sri Lankan military operations to continue without substantial penalty. Indian policy-makers had little love for the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and did not want the Rajapaksa government in Colombo to throw its lot in entirely with its supporters China and Pakistan, but they also needed to show some degree of concern about the fate of Tamil civilians and broader political reform. This stance did not win India much public support in Sri Lanka, but sufficiently assuaged Tamil politicians—many themselves somewhat ambivalent about Tamil separatism—and the public to weather the crisis. Since 2009, India has continued to be involved in providing aid to northern Sri Lanka and maintains an interest in the island's activities (in part because of fears of Chinese and Pakistani influence), but the Tamil issue has dropped in salience.

Second, the influence of West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has played a key role in slowing India–Bangladesh agreements over water and land boundary demarcation. Banerjee leads the All-India Trinamool Congress, a regional party with its base in West Bengal that has been attempting to solidify its dominance in the state after decades of CPM hegemony. She has been aggressive in publicly trying to advance West Bengal's goals, and in 2011 she undermined an accord over sharing of the Teesta River's water that badly embarrassed the national government, despite the Trinamool Congress at that time being part of the ruling United Progressive Alliance. This has delayed the signing of the agreement through the time of this writing (*Times of India* 2013). Trinamool opposition—as well as skepticism from the BJP and the Assam regional party the Asom Gana Parishad—has also delayed passage of an agreement with Bangladesh on finalizing the land boundaries between the two countries. West Bengal's interests have therefore directly clashed with those of the national government, and the Trinamool Congress's clout in the Lok Sabha and potential value as a coalition partner make it difficult to easily overcome.

Bureaucracies and Foreign and Security Policy

The day-to-day business of foreign and defense policy is not run by politicians but by bureaucracies, the key ones being: the Ministry of External Affairs, the Ministry of Defense, the Home Ministry, and the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). With the increasing absence of high level strategic guidance from India's politicians, these bureaucracies not only manage the daily affairs of India's foreign and security policy, but their policies—or lack thereof—aggregate into India's broader strategic orientation. We take each of these bureaucracies in turn.

Ministry of External Affairs

Responsible for the diplomatic affairs of the Indian state, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) is run by a small coterie of Indian Foreign Service officers, the most senior of which is the Foreign Secretary. The Minister of External Affairs is one of the 'big four' ministers and a member of the Cabinet Committee on Security, along with the Home, Finance, and Defense ministers. Historically, the Prime Minister has sometimes assumed the portfolio of Minister of External Affairs, with varied attention paid to the post (compare Nehru to Manmohan Singh's roles in the post for example, where the latter paid very little attention to the role or the ministry). But, most often, a senior INC or BJP politician assumes the role, with the task of representing India abroad and presiding over the ministry's foreign service officers.

The hallmark of the MEA is just how relatively understaffed the ministry is to run India's vast diplomatic apparatus abroad as one of Asia's major powers and one of the world's significant rising powers. India has 120 missions/embassies/high commissions and around 50 consulates worldwide, staffed by 900 Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officers and 3,000 support staff (clerks, etc.). By comparison, the United States has a foreign service officer size of over 20,000, European powers such as Britain and France have around 6,000, China over 4,000. India's IFS size is roughly on par with that of Singapore. Though Indian IFS officers are widely regarded and certainly not short of talent, efforts at expansion have been thwarted both within the MEA and by the government. The end result has been that the portfolios of the ministry's joint secretaries are so large that it is not possible for even the most talented officers to keep up with the flow of daily information on all of the countries they are required to cover. This means that the literal management of India's day-to-day external affairs is conducted by a very thinly stretched officer corps that struggles to keep up with the velocity of modern international affairs. As such, the MEA is largely relegated to tending to the mechanics of international diplomacy and has very little room—save the rare talented foreign secretary, or ambassador or high commissioner—to influence India's strategic orientation abroad.

Ministry of Defense

The other major ministry in the execution of India's foreign and security policy is the Ministry of Defense (MoD). Though the MEA faces a chronic understaffing problem, the MoD faces a significant shortage in quality bureaucrats to tend to the complex process of defense acquisitions and policy (Mukherjee 2013). It is not uncommon for a director general of defense acquisition, who is a senior Indian Administrative Service officer, to assume the post with literally no national security experience. A recent such officer was posted there from the Ministry of Agriculture with no prior exposure to defense acquisitions, but was now in a position to guide India's massive defense acquisition projects, which is now one of the world's largest arms importers.

There does, however, seem to be a method to this perceived madness. Since the Bofors scandal in the late 1980s which brought down the Rajiv Gandhi government and his trusted advisor, a minister of state for defense, Arun Singh, the mantra of the MoD has been akin to 'no more Bofors'. The ministry would rather not complete an acquisition than face charges that a major defense program was initiated or consummated due to corruption. As a result, acquisitions move at a glacial pace, if at all (Cohen and Dasgupta 2010). It is no surprise, then, that each of the three armed services charged with managing India's security affairs is consistently under-resourced. The air force faces persistent shortfalls in mandated combat aircraft strength, the army's infantry equipment is literally from the Second World War era, and until the INS *Vikramaditya*, the navy's lone aircraft carrier was INS *Viraat* which was launched by the United Kingdom in 1953. For an MoD that views acquisitions as only downside political risk, however, the expansion of India's military platforms through acquisition may only proceed at an excruciatingly slow pace by design.

In terms of foreign policy orientation, the MoD's historical arms relationship with the Soviet Union and now Russia for much of India's mainline platforms has hamstrung efforts to diversify India's foreign relations and defense acquisitions at times. Since the 1971 Indo-Soviet friendship agreement, India enjoyed a burgeoning relationship with the USSR, including an arms relationship that India could not get anywhere else (e.g. the United States or United Kingdom) for mainline platforms such as MiG and eventually Sukhoi combat aircraft and T-series main battle tanks. However, once this relationship began, India's armed forces and the MoD became dependent on the USSR for these platforms, and for spare parts, training, and maintenance. There is no easy way for the MoD to disentangle itself from this relationship. As much as it would like to diversify its arms portfolio, the combination of 'do nothing' and an inevitable reliance on the USSR gives it very little ability to command better prices from the Soviets or maneuver elsewhere.

Due to a problematic civil–military relationship that dates back to Nehru's years, as outlined by Anit Mukherjee and as argued by Stephen Cohen (both in this volume), India's armed services have very little input into India's broader strategic orientation, or even on issues involving nuclear or overall defense posture. Indeed, Cohen and Dasgupta (2010) have argued that India's military has a unique and disproportionately poor level of influence on foreign and security policy for a major power. Pleas from the military to expedite the acquisitions process often fall on deaf ears, given the narrow and often countervailing interests of the MoD bureaucrats.

Defence Research and Development Organisation

Since acquisition of defense capabilities is wrought with bureaucratic pathologies, the other alternative available to India is indigenous development of capabilities to meet its foreign security policy needs. Indeed, Nehru made indigenization of capabilities a pillar of his foreign defense policy. Unfortunately, the organization responsible for India's indigenous defense developments, the DRDO, has persistently overpromised

and underdelivered (Cohen and Dasgupta 2010). For example, platforms such as the Arjun tank have been riddled with delays and cost overruns. Started in 1972, the Arjun program has been decades in the making and was designed to provide an alternative to the T-90 Russian main battle tank. Unfortunately, initial problems with the lack of night vision, the fire control system, and an underpowered engine created significant delays that forced the army to order T-90s anyway, and it is unclear the degree to which the army even wants to hide the Arjun anywhere. It seems to prefer the proven T-90. The inefficiency of DRDO has in fact forced India to rely even more heavily on foreign arms imports, and particularly Russia for its conventional foreign security needs.

The other major area where DRDO affects India's foreign security policy is with respect to India's nuclear posture. Here, DRDO behaves as an autonomous technology organization whose scientists dream of building every missile, missile defense, and multiple warhead capability they can think of (Abraham 1998; Narang 2013). With little official strategic guidance from civilians on nuclear strategy and posture—though this seems to be evolving somewhat—DRDO hides behind the moniker of 'technology demonstrators' to pursue capabilities that are at odds with India's officially stated 'credible minimum deterrence' nuclear doctrine. Indeed, various heads of the DRDO have discussed their development of intercontinental ballistic missiles , missile defenses, and multiple independently targetable nuclear warheads while simultaneously admitting that none of these programs have received 'political clearance'. The problem, of course, is that India's adversaries—particularly China and Pakistan—are forced to respond to every technology development India pursues, even if it will never be adopted. In this area, DRDO's penchant for overpromising and underdelivering may place India in a particularly vulnerable arms race that its political leaders have no intention of entering. The root of this problem lies in the fact that bureaucracies such as the DRDO face little political accountability and pursue their parochial interests, which in some—perhaps many—cases, run counter to the national interest. Sadly, as noted earlier, there is often very little incentive for politicians to invest energy in managing organizations like the DRDO, let alone reining them in.

Ministry of Home Affairs

For the sake of completeness, we mention here the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) which is largely responsible for internal security, but under which a whole host of paramilitary organizations such as the Border Security Force (BSF) and the Central Reserve Police Force are managed. To the degree these forces affect foreign policy, it is often in border interactions with Pakistan and China, and where inter-ministry conflicts between the armed services under MoD and these forces can be particularly troublesome. MHA is also deeply involved in internal security operations against groups that have passive or active foreign sponsorship, which makes it relevant to some key foreign policy issues (Staniland 2012). Again, with little high level state attention to foreign

policy, the parochial interests of each of these security services as well as those of the armed services can generate schizophrenic security behavior, especially on the ground where multiple military and paramilitary organizations may be conducting operations that undermine each other. The BSF has become embroiled in Indo-Bangladesh diplomacy in particular because it is alleged to have used excessive force against Bangladeshi migrants trying to get into India.

The State and Foreign Policy

How do the electoral incentives spelled out in the first section affect the management and behavior of these state institutions in the conduct of India's foreign and security policy?

Politicization and Neglect

State apparatuses can rarely be separated from the political contexts in which they operate. India is no exception. The Indian state, both nationally and subnationally, is generally—though with substantial regional variation—heavily politicized and used to pursue the electoral interests of politicians. This politicization can be enacted through laws, such as quotas, entitlement programs, or language policy, and through the selective implementation of laws (often for the purposes of patronage). Governance outcomes reflect the political interests of elected officials, often to the detriment of public goods provision and efficient services.

The foreign and security apparatus of India reveal a different pattern than this broader trend toward electorally-driven politicization. As we have shown, foreign affairs are not generally a vote winner. They are mentioned on the campaign trail, usually with regard to Pakistan and in December 2013 dealing with an imbroglio over the US arrest of an Indian consular official, and occasionally are objects of ideological commitment, but elections overwhelmingly tend to be waged on other issues, from language to patronage. This means that the MEA and MoD suffer from less direct political interference than their domestic peers. As a result, the ideal-type of the autonomous rational bureaucracy is at least conceivable in this area.

Yet this situation has some important negative consequences. The lack of political attention reduces resource allocation and minimizes the political oversight of foreign policy-making. Political neglect can encourage inertia and institutional ossification, while reducing the responsiveness of bureaucrats. There are dangers to having powerful politicians getting involved in foreign policy, but there are also dangers to having them not involved: new initiatives are not created or implemented, bureaucrats fear that they will not be protected for controversial but potentially helpful decisions, and strategic coordination is not imposed by active political oversight. Politicians agree that India

faces foreign policy challenges, and are willing to throw some money at these problems, but their involvement largely stops there.

Limited Capacity and Insufficient Oversight

This political context has allowed for an often inefficient and self-encapsulated defense and foreign affairs apparatus to emerge. There are other important factors that also contribute to this outcome. The British legacy of 'generalist' civil servants means that MoD civilians are often not expert on defense issues and thus poorly equipped to assess strategy or link it to military decisions. These pathologies affect each of the major bureaucracies mentioned above. Resource constraints limit the size of MEA relative to its peers, undermining India's ability to tackle a broad range of issues and relationships at once. Tanvi Madan in this volume has outlined how MEA's size and limited expertise makes it a less potent international force than it should be given India's size and power.

These dysfunctions arising are most noticeable in the area of weapons development, in which DRDO has massively underperformed, even when acknowledging resource limitations and the inevitable delays that accompany research and development. The MoD's ability to clearly articulate strategy and link it to weapons procurement has been repeatedly questioned: as Cohen and Dasgupta (2010) have argued, new resource inflows have not been yoked to clear strategy. Delays in decision-making, delays in implementation, and sniping between politicians, bureaucrats, and the military all undermine India's pursuit of its goals abroad.

The structure of civil–military relations, a legacy of Nehru's policies in the 1950s, has succeeded in keeping the military out of politics, but has created other problems. The military is excluded from a number of key areas of decision-making but in turn has insulated much of its operational and personnel activities from political oversight. While the military constantly complains—often rightly—about its exclusion from top-level decision-making, it has not offered particularly innovative strategic options of its own (with the navy being an important exception).

The Need for Balance

India would be best-served by a balance in which politicians and voters paid consistent attention to the transmission belts of policy-making without turning the military and defense/foreign affairs bureaucracy into tools of political and personal gain. Yet the structure of Indian politics has reduced the incentives of citizens and their representatives to take an active interest in managing 'high politics', and organizational incentives and resource limitations have prevented the emergence of a skilled and flexible technocracy.

These are not problems unique to India. Waste and delays in weapons development, gaps between means and ends, and a political class more oriented toward elections than strategy can be found around the world. India is not alone in facing these challenges, and they reflect

relatively clear political causes rather than deep cultural roots. Many Indian bureaucrats and military officers are competent and effective. But the problems that have arisen take on particular potency in a poor country with a cut-throat, complex political competition and underperforming state capacity that faces a challenging international environment.

Tensions and Change

These trends have led to some interesting tensions. While regionalization has undermined national political power, it has opened the door for state governments to occasionally become involved in regional foreign policy issues. While economic growth, in some form, continues to be the primary focus of domestic politicians, its occurrence has created more resources for the defense establishment to use. National politicians speak of international strength even as they devote their greatest efforts to securing regional allies and sorting out intra-party factional disputes. These tensions make it possible that we will see change over time as Indian politics shift in focus and form. In this section we discuss several key issues that may change the basic political picture we have told.

Growth Uncertainties

If India continues to grow at a reasonably fast rate, the key challenge for Indian decision-makers will be how to manage and allocate resources in foreign policy. Continued growth is likely to lead to broad continuity in patterns of decision-making: slow and often inefficient, but basically trying to turn wealth into power. The gap between wealth and power will endure, though it may diminish over time if there are political changes that we discuss below.

A more ominous possibility is a serious economic slowdown that persists. The Indian economy in 2012 and 2013 has faced substantial challenges, and if they are not overcome the Indian state will face real scarcity in how it can spend its money. If our political arguments are correct, defense and security spending will suffer because of the higher salience of domestic politics. Politicians sitting atop rickety coalitions and dealing with popular discontent are more likely to pursue political survival by using available resources for appealing to voters. Already slow procurement decisions and limited MEA capabilities will feel further strain as leaders try to maintain a minimum acceptable level of defense preparedness and diplomatic outreach without going above it.

Shifting Issues?

Indian politics are currently oriented around a blend of national and regional parties, with the need for national coalition government taken for granted. Devolution toward the states

has occurred that may give more autonomy and political clout to chief ministers, especially those not beholden to Congress or the BJP. A key question is whether this may change, either in a resurgence of national parties and national issues or a deepening consolidation of subnational parties and state governments. Entrenched regionalism will continue coalition politics and maintain a role for state governments, continuing the status quo.

It is not clear how this outcome of continued decentralization might reverse course. The growth of an urban middle class may encourage a focus on development and corruption that takes on a national hue. If so, foreign policy could take on greater electoral significance among a better-informed electorate with fewer pressing subsistence needs, creating a more national constituency for these issues. Yet this prospect, though possible, is still a long way away. The urban middle class' remains a small, if growing, proportion of the electorate and unreliable voters, and its primary attention thus far appears to be focused on domestic issues of corruption, crime, and development. Many wealthier Indians have largely detached themselves from reliance on the state and involvement in politics. And the record even from wealthy democracies does not suggest that foreign policy will be a front-line issue in voting: in the United States, for instance, with its clearer two-party presidential system and massive global commitments, economic and social issues and partisan commitments usually (though of course not always) drive vote choice.

Nevertheless, there are two possible trajectories that could at least partially improve accountability and the links between democracy and foreign policy in India. The first is a return to greater control by national parties, which do at least ostensibly have ideological positions on foreign affairs (Ogden 2014; Narang 2009). The key to this trajectory would be a balance between a national party having clear control over foreign policy while still facing electoral competition that makes politicians responsive to constituents. This is a difficult combination to strike, but it could create a clearer strategic focus backed, crucially, by actual oversight and implementation.

The second, more speculative, trajectory toward tighter linkages between democracy and foreign policy in India would be if powerful regional parties begin to articulate more developed views on foreign affairs. Parties like the SP, BSP, Janata Dal United , Biju Janata Dal, and AIADMK are major players in domestic politics but have not carved out a clear sense of how they view India in the word. The CPM in West Bengal, with its relatively coherent ideology, is a major exception to the broader pattern of regional parties, but its decline has limited its recent influence. If the more powerful regional parties begin to assume a greater role in Delhi—or the Aam Aadmi Party expands its reach—they may face greater pressures, and desires, to deal with foreign policy issues. This would be a very healthy development, breaking the INC–BJP duopoly of strategic thinking at the national level and opening space for new voices with political power to make themselves heard.

Changing International Pressures

India's international environment is part of what it makes the dynamics of its domestic politics so interesting: despite having a hated rival and an emerging superpower as

neighbors, Indian elections center more on agricultural policy and coalitional bargaining than on debates about grand strategy. Part of this is because the Indian state, while facing a hostile neighborhood, has general security advantages: conventional superiority and an increasingly yawning power gap with Pakistan in its favor, and geographic buffers against China that limit any skirmishes to highly publicized but generally low-threat incidents involving small pieces of otherwise uninhabitable land.

These inherent features of India's security relationships mean that its leaders have the luxury of being lethargic and apathetic in their approach to security affairs. However, a major change in India's local security environment—either an imploding or exploding Pakistan, or a markedly more aggressive China—could shake India's politicians and electorate out of complacency. Indeed, this may be the most powerful mechanism that could systematically concentrate India's attention abroad. Crucially, however, such external shocks would need to be channeled through the domestic political system (Schweller 2006); this means that any analysis of India in the world needs to continue to take seriously its internal political life.

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CHAPTER 16

THE PARLIAMENT

RUDRA CHAUDHURI

'I am entirely in the hands of the House', argued Jawaharlal Nehru in March 1948 (Nehru 1948). The Prime Minister was responding to a series of questions with regards to Kashmir's accession to India. His audience were members seated in the Constituent Assembly—the first Indian Parliament following independence. To assuage the growing anxiety of his fellow-members, Nehru argued that a White Paper on Kashmir would be distributed to explain the government's position in some detail. India may have become an independent state only six months before, but the need to justify strategies of action was all too clear. Indeed, Indian foreign policy may have 'emerged whole from the head and heart' of its first Prime Minister—as insiders and scholars popularly contend (Tharoor 2003: 183; Malone 2011: 48–9), but India's advance in international politics was hardly free from the constraints of domestic politics and elite opinion.

Whether it is Nehru or the dozen or so incumbents after him, the Indian Parliament has demonstratively placed limitations on the exercise of executive authority in the broader domain of international affairs. This of course does not mean that Parliament dictates India's approach to the world. It certainly does not. Unlike Germany—where German troop movements and mandates are strictly controlled by the Bundestag, in India—much like in the United Kingdom—there is no legal requirement for parliamentary approval on matters of foreign policy. Yet, 60-odd years of India's political history is rife with instances of executive authority being checked in matters of foreign policy. To an extent, and the legal restrictions apart, this is hardly surprising. In the first general elections in 1952, the Indian National Congress won a staggering 364 out of 489 parliamentary seats (Election Commission of India 2014)—giving India's oldest political organization a 74.4 per cent majority. But still some 86 million people voted against the party (Guha 2008: 146). The existence of an opposition and of political differences was all too clear. Parliament served to amplify such differences, and decision-makers found themselves answerable to dissenting voices.

This chapter is divided into four parts. First, it outlines the constitutional role of the Parliament in the domain of foreign policy. It highlights how India's early political leaders—including the authors of the constitution—interpreted the place of Parliament

in the broader realm of argumentation and contestation in managing India's role in the world. Second, it looks carefully at single-party governments in the early years of the republic and their relationship with the Indian Parliament in the making of foreign policy. Contrary to popular accounts, it argues that successive Indian prime ministers found themselves more vulnerable to the push and pull tensions of parliamentary opinion. This was amply clear in their approach to treaties, alliances, territorial agreements, and war and peace more generally. Third, the chapter focuses on the experience of governments and the execution of foreign policy in the twenty-first century. It assesses whether or not Indian foreign policy, as scholars contend, has been significantly 'decentralized' in the past decade, making the executive all that more vulnerable to legislative scrutiny (Jha 2004; Bhambari 2006; Ghosh 2010). The last section studies the rising importance of state legislatures and regional politics in the larger construction of foreign policy.

The Constituent Assembly and Foreign Policy

The drafting committee of the Constitution of India completed its deliberations on 26 November 1949, when the motion to approve independent India's Constitution was passed. In its final form, the Constitution included 395 articles and 8 schedules. Over eleven sessions since the drafting committee was appointed on 29 August 1947, 7,635 amendments were considered; 2,473 such amendments were included in the final document (Rao 2005: 936–46). An astounding 53,000 visitors were admitted to the Assembly's galleries during these discussions. As Rajendra Prasad—India's first President—remarked at the concluding session of the adoption ceremony, there was little doubt that the making of the Constitution was not only closely scrutinized by representatives—elected with a limited franchise prior to independence—within the Assembly but also fell within the glare of the public at large (Prasad 1949: 945).

Yet, and notwithstanding particular instances when issues such as Kashmir and 'neutrality'—as non-alignment was referred to by members of the Assembly—were discussed in some length, there was no dedicated session on the Parliament and foreign policy. In fact, there was only one nominee—the eminent jurist B. Shiva Rao—for election to the first Standing Committee of the Ministry of External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations. Compare this with the Standing Finance Committee or the Committee on Public Accounts (*Constituent Assembly of India* [CAI] 1948: 3387–8). Heated discussions with regards to emerging alliances and membership to the Commonwealth—discussed below—obscured any serious attention to the functional jurisdiction of the Parliament in shaping foreign policy. The defining role of Parliament in the construction of foreign policy was largely left to the legal lettering of the Constitution.

Article 246—Seventh Schedule (List I) on Centre–State relations—placed the 'defence of India' and 'foreign affairs', including 'all matters which bring the Union into relation with any foreign country' and other such related activities—like citizenship, defence works, consular services, the UN, foreign loans, and participation in international conferences—under what came to be called the 'Union List'. These included subjects where only the 'Parliament'—at the centre—'has exclusive power to make laws' (Majumdar and Kataria 2004: 245–8). In short, the question of foreign policy was left to the central government. State legislatures had no legal jurisdiction in this domain.

Further, treaties could be entered into without the need for a vote in Parliament. War could be declared without formal authorization by Parliament. Unlike the presidential system in the United States, where one or both of the Houses of the US Congress might be overwhelmingly represented by a party not controlling the executive office, there are no such seeming paradoxes in the parliamentary system of governance. Hence, and in most cases, there is little possibility for the legislature to completely overrule executive decisions. This is of course a very real constraint in the American system of governance. Woodrow Wilson's inability to attract Congressional support for American membership to the League of Nations in 1919 and Bill Clinton's incapacity to convince a Republican Senate to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty in 1999 are clear examples of the legal limits placed on executive authority. In India, there is simply no requirement for ratification. The only exception to this pertains to agreements that entail acquiring or ceding territory—discussed in the next section.

Territorial arrangements apart, signing an agreement with an international entity—whether it is to do with nuclear commerce or climate change—does not require parliamentary approval. The incumbent's signature on the dotted line is as good as ratification. In the Westminster system, the only way in which such decisions can be determinately overruled is by what constitutionalists call the 'power of voting supply' or by calling for a no-confidence motion (Appadorai 1981: 59–60). If the government's majority is called into question—as was the case in India during the negotiations that led to the signing of the Indo-US Nuclear Deal, a vote might be held to test the government's confidence in its own numbers. Yet, apart from such extreme measures, there is no legal mechanism by which the government is required to seek parliamentary endorsement in the pursuit of foreign policy. In fact, Nehru made this clear to the Assembly even prior to independence. During a discussion on the 'scope and functioning' of the Standing Committee of the Ministry of External Affairs, it was clarified that there was no question of the committee functioning like the Foreign Affairs Committee in the US Senate, which has the authority to exercise legislative checks on executive action. At best, the Prime Minister argued, the committee could be provided 'certain latitude' (Nehru 1947: 405).

There are, however, a number of ways in which Parliament and the opposition parties can shape the government's prerogatives. First, it may exercise financial control on budgets allocated by the Cabinet for a variety of activities. Members of the Estimates Committee and the Public Accounts Committee may quiz the government about its fiscal requests. For example, in the first ever budget discussions in the Assembly, members

scrutinized even relatively minor issues like an increase in postal rates between India and Pakistan, which was thought to adversely impact relations with the latter (CAI 1948: 2922). The committees in question might not have the authority to reshape government priorities, but the latitude to question the government's decisions does force ministers to explain the government's reasoning. Only those figures and estimates associated with the Research and Analysis Wing—India's external intelligence agency instituted in September 1968—are hidden from parliamentary scrutiny, but this too is beginning to invite greater public attention. Second, members of Parliament may propose motions and resolutions to deliberate on a range of issues, and by so doing push the government of the day to justify its decisions. In 2003, for instance, it took multiple interventions on the part of the Speaker of the House to convince the then BJP-led government to work with the Congress—the chief opposition party at the time—to arrive at agreed language to 'condemn' rather than 'deplore' the US-led intervention in Iraq. Further, the parliamentary committee on minister's assurances may assess the extent to which assurances—such as not joining the US-led Coalition in 2003—have been maintained.

While such institutional mechanisms place a degree of constraint on the incumbent's desires and wishes, observable limitations have also been placed because of what might be called the paradox of majority governance. In principle the government, which commands majority support in Parliament, does not require parliamentary approval for the conduct of foreign policy. But as the majority representatives of the people, there is a much greater need to enjoy and maintain legitimacy. This has pushed single-party governments to seriously consider opposition demands. In essence, a majority in Parliament does not in itself ensure majority rule in matters of foreign policy. Nehru understood this all too well. He had little hesitation in acknowledging that 'external affairs will follow internal affairs' (CAI 1948: 1766). The following section outlines the friction inherent in maintaining this balance in the pursuit of foreign policy in the early years of the Republic.

The Parliament and Foreign Policy: The Early Years

In November 1948, the Constitution drafting body recruited its newest member—Thirumala Rao. A relatively unknown Congress representative in the Constituent Assembly, Rao was one of a handful of members to make decisive interventions on the importance of the Constitution and international affairs. 'Complete sovereign independence', Rao argued, ought to be the 'practical basis on which we [India] are building up our constitution'. Only then, he asserted, 'we [India] may not estrange people like the Americans in the future'. The reality *and* perception of independence, Rao would later suggest, needed reflection and adequate space in India's soon-to-be produced written Constitution. Only then, according to him, would those in America as well as the Soviet

Union believe in a free India willing to make strategic decisions outside of Westminster's wishes and demands. Hence, Rao made clear, joining the Commonwealth would be akin to 'tying ourselves [India] to the apron strings of British imperialism' (CAI 1948: 317). It would send the wrong message.

Indian membership in the Commonwealth would soon become a matter of heated debate within the Assembly. On 16 May 1949, the Prime Minister moved a resolution for 'continued membership' in the Commonwealth. A day later, the motion was passed (CAI 1949: 2–3 and 71–2). From the outset, and notwithstanding the opposition voiced by the likes of Rao, the resolution passed with no significant hurdle. In some ways, the case for continued membership in the Commonwealth reinforces the popularly held view that Nehru was only 'lightly checked' by domestic forces (Khilnani 2003: 39). Yet, there was considerable criticism from both within the Congress Parliamentary Party (CPP) and members of the Assembly—so much so that Nehru avoided a vote within the CPP. For one member—who would go on to propose an amendment to delay the decision to join the Commonwealth till after the first general elections scheduled for 1952, 'joining the commonwealth' was no different to choosing sides and essentially 'joining the third world war on the Anglo-American side'. The amendment was finally 'negativated', but the mood of the Assembly was such that the Prime Minister was forced to defend his reasoning for membership (CAI 1949: 71–2). Following multiple iterations to describe India's linkages with the Commonwealth, the government was pushed to carefully choose politically acceptable language to explain Indian membership (Gopal 1979: 48–55).

In consequence, and unlike any other Commonwealth member up until then, India accepted the British monarch as only a 'symbol' of a 'free partnership or association'. India, the Commonwealth resolution stated, 'owed no allegiance to the King' (Nehru 1949: 2–3). That Parliament provided a degree of oversight in the construction and exercise of foreign policy was clear. In fact, following the debates with regards to the Commonwealth, Nehru's government found it increasingly untenable to provide temporary facilities—previously agreed with the United Kingdom—to train Gurkhas for induction into the British armed forces (Appadorai 1981: 68–9).

Apart from the issue of entering into international arrangements, parliamentary scrutiny was also evident in the case of responding to international alliances forged in India's neighbourhood. In 1954, following President Eisenhower's decision to enter into a Mutual Defence Pact with Pakistan, Nehru's government found itself pressured within India from both the right and the left. In the elections of 1952, the Communist Party of India (CPI)—the largest opposition party in the first Lok Sabha—managed to secure 16 seats. The Bharatiya Jan Sangh (BJS), formed only four days before the polls opened on 25 October 1951, picked up three seats (Election Commission of India 2014). Yet, and with such minimal numbers, their response to the 1954 pact was astonishingly effective in shaping the government's stance. For Nehru, the key lay in maintaining a sense of balance. That is, making sure not to veer too close to the Anglo-American block in the early days of the Cold War—favoured by the BJS—or towards Russia, the preferred approach amongst some in the CPI. Indeed, the Prime Minister himself would have preferred

not to censure the United States beyond what he thought was acceptable, even though the pact with Pakistan had brought the Cold War to South Asia. Nehru was aware that his government had disagreed with President Truman on Indo-China, where he was 'scorned' for urging the French to negotiate with Ho Chi Minh (Nanda 1971). He infuriated the US State Department by refusing to accept much-needed economic assistance and for welcoming friendly relations with Russia, which Nehru knew India would 'have much to do with' (Gopal 1961).

In Nehru's mind, there was a limit to Indian criticism of Western policy. This became clear in the correspondence concerning the implementation of the North Atlantic Treaty. As Nehru himself wrote, in the approach to the Atlantic Pact, 'many other factors need to be considered' (Nehru 1950). Further, there was a clear domestic rationale for maintaining cordial relations with the West. Uncomfortable with growing contacts between more radical strands of the CPI who were ideologically mentored by those in Moscow, archival records make clear that Nehru would have preferred to construct a carefully worded response that did not censure the United States beyond reason.

The BJS and the right more generally advocated a 'know-your-friend' policy of closer association with the Anglo-American powers (*Times of India* 1953). At the other end of the political divide, the primary concern for certain members within the CPI arose because of what they believed to be Nehru's Western ways. Their central aim was to make sure that the government did not embrace a similar agreement—offered by Eisenhower—with Washington. In the end, what is clear is that the Prime Minister was pushed into making sharper statements against the Pact and America more generally. The tenor of such criticism was far more forceful than he had first intended (Chaudhuri 2012). Once again, the efficacy of the opposition—even in minimal numbers—was telling.

Apart from Pakistan, domestic pressure was most evident in India's dealings with the recently established People's Republic of China (PRC). The feedback loop between opposition demands—including those from within the Congress—and the government's approach is evident in at least two instances. It makes clear the paradox where a majority party—winning anything between 40 and 45 per cent of the overall vote share in the first three general elections (Election Commission of India 2014)—was pushed to shape policy imperatives in line with opposition demands. First, following heated diplomatic exchanges between Nehru and Zhou Enlai with regards to the disputed border between India and China, Nehru was finally compelled to place such correspondence before Parliament. This was especially important given that the Prime Minister, according to his biographer Sarvepalli Gopal, recognized that this was no longer 'a matter of minor specific disputes' (Gopal et al. 1984: 96). The government was pushed into producing yet another White Paper explaining its stance. It was clear that concessions offered by Nehru's government would also require persuading Parliament as to its merits. In fact, this would prove impossible.

His own Home Minister—Govind Ballabh Pant—rejected the Prime Minister's suggestion that India permit the PRC to use the Aksai Chin—the high wastelands

sought by China. This is of course territory that the People's Liberation Army finally occupied following the 1962 war. Opposition—including from within his party—made the likelihood of offering concessions impossible (Gopal et al. 1984: 96–103). Further, any formal swap of territory—such as Aksai Chin in exchange for the North East Frontier Agency, where Indian claims were legally stronger—would require an Act of Parliament. While the legislature has little legal authority in checking foreign policy, changing territorial borders requires parliamentary approval as clearly outlined in Article 3 of the Indian constitution (Majumdar and Kataria 2004: 2). This would have been near impossible to secure in the late 1950s, when the idea of a swap was first mooted. It remains impossible and a serious impediment to a future settlement with China—as discussed below in more detail.

Second, parliamentary pressure was noticeable immediately following the war. In exchange for Western arms and military assistance, both the British and American administrations pushed Nehru to enter into negotiations with Pakistan on Kashmir. Six rounds were scheduled between December 1962 and the summer of 1963. While for the most part details were kept from Parliament, it became increasingly clear that any meaningful agreement—even if agreed to by the Pakistani delegation—would not gain approbation of the Parliament. Whilst the relatively newly founded Swatantra Party and the BJS refrained from making personal attacks on the Prime Minister, they held their ground when it came to Kashmir (*Hindustan Times* 1963). In February 1963, after the second round of talks, A. B. Vajpayee, the young and eloquent BJS leader stated that talks with Pakistan should be postponed (McMahon 1996: 296). Vajpayee even warned the United States and the United Kingdom against interfering in the Kashmir talks (*Hindustan Times* 1963). The idea of ceding territory—an essential requirement in the negotiations—was out of the question. There is of course little to suggest that Nehru himself favoured negotiations at this point. He did not. Rather, the point here is that negotiators were constantly aware that even minimal concessions—such as limited changes along the ceasefire line dividing Kashmir—remained out of the question (Appadorai 1981: 71–5).

To be sure, parliamentary approval in matters related to acquiring and ceding territory places significant checks on executive authority. This was made clear for the first time after the so-called Nehru–Noon agreement in 1958. Following meetings between Pakistani Prime Minister Firoz Khan Noon and Nehru in September 1958, a joint communiqué stated that the two leaders 'agreed to an exchange of enclaves of the former Cooch Behar state in Pakistan and Pakistan enclaves in India' (Nehru 2012: 547–8). These enclaves—or little islands and fragments of inhabited land—belonged to the former Princely States of Cooch Behar and Rangpur prior to 1947. The Radcliffe Award of 17 August 1947—referring to the division of India and Pakistan as administered by the British lawyer Cyril Radcliffe—cut through these states, leaving Indian enclaves in East Pakistan and Pakistani enclaves in India. The Nehru–Noon meeting sought to exchange

territories on the border between East Pakistan and West Bengal, in India. This included the Cooch-Behar enclaves and an area known as the Berubari Union.

In essence, and as Nehru told the Lok Sabha a day after the meeting with Noon: 'all these changes involve some exchanges of territory; in some cases, India gains a little territory, and in others, they [Pakistan] gain it. These are more or less the decisions arrived at' (Nehru 2012: 549–57). What the Prime Minister did not foresee was that the decision to exchange territory lay with the legislature and not the executive. For two years, between 1958 and 1960, the Indian Attorney General—representing the Prime Minister's Office—argued the matter in the Supreme Court. The government's position was simple: that the exchange merely reflected formalizing lines and boundaries accepted by the Radcliffe Award, but which could not be implemented in 1947 because of the hastened way in which Bengal was partitioned. The Supreme Court disagreed, and made clear—in a judgement published in March 1960—that the Nehru–Noon agreement, if implemented, would mean that India would have to both cede and acquire territory. To do so, a constitutional amendment—in accordance with provisions outlined in Article 368 of the constitution—would, according to the bench, be 'necessary' and needed to be passed with two-thirds majority in both the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha (Indiakanoon 2014). In short, the exchange in itself was deemed unconstitutional. Legislative checks on executive action could not be clearer.

In May 1974, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and Mujibur Rehman, the first President of independent Bangladesh, signed a land border agreement, reaffirming the 1958 exchange. In 2013, the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) introduced the 119th constitutional amendment with the view to ratify the Gandhi–Mujibur deal. Although initially willing, the BJP ultimately refused to support the bill. It was referred to the Standing Committee on Law and Justice, where it remains to date. Further, parliamentary approval is also vital when acquiring new territory. The 12th Amendment Act, passed in March 1962, ratified India's annexation of Goa—a former Portuguese colony—in 1961. Similarly, the 36th Amendment recognized Sikkim as India's twenty-second state.

Such scrutiny on the part of the legislature significantly shapes India's relations with China, where territorial disagreement dates back to the very birth of the People's Republic. For the most part, scholars and analysts have focused on what they deem to be China's unwillingness to conclude a border agreement with India. In fact, what few have considered is the sheer difficulty in ratifying such an agreement within India. Even a government with a majority in the Lok Sabha, such as the BJP-led government that came to power in May 2014—the first political party in almost 30 years to have secured a majority on its own—will potentially find it difficult to implement a territorial agreement with China. The BJP may have won 282 out of 543 seats in the Lok Sabha, but it does not command a majority in the Rajya Sabha—at least not to date, where it would need to secure a two-thirds majority for a constitutional amendment to be passed. In such cases, the role of Parliament in the execution of foreign policy is all too evident.

Parliament and Foreign Policy in the Twenty-First Century

The present milieu is said to be one in which a shift is underway from what commentators call a 'centralised decision-making process'—arguably visible during the single party rule of the Congress—to a 'decentralised process of foreign policy formulation' (Jha 2004: 319). According to such analysis, coalition governments—like the Congress-led UPA—are thought to be much more susceptible to parliamentary pressure. This is because of the need to consider arguments levelled by both coalition partners as well as opposition parties in Parliament. The negotiations leading to the nuclear deal between the United States and India and the political crisis it created—risking the Congress's loss of confidence within Parliament—is touted as a popular case study that outlines the apparent tensions inherent in 'fractured Indian coalition politics' (Chakravarthi 2009: 61). The impact of such contest was visible and well documented in at least the English-language visual and print media. Yet, the key question remains: are governments today really more susceptible to the sorts of parliamentary pressures outlined above, especially in cases where parliamentary approval is not required? The nuclear deal in fact highlights paradoxical conclusions.

For instance, the Congress Party, the leading partner with 145 seats in the UPA government, was able to insulate parliamentary criticism with regards to the nuclear deal, including censure from its allies. It was able to do so even when its key allies—the four left parties with a total of 59 seats—withdrew their support (Election Commission of India 2014). As far as the left were concerned, the deal would 'entangle India into a complex web of political, economic and military relationships as part of the strategic partnership' (Gupta 2007). Unconvinced by Prime Minister Singh's repeated assurances that the deal did not in fact draw India into an alliance, the left withdrew their support. Rather than shaping the government's priorities or altering the government's advance, the left's opposition and eventual withdrawal led to a brief moment of political uncertainty. Importantly, the left's 59 seats were soon replaced. A lot had to do with the fact that the deal was more a matter of elite debate than mass politics. It was not a voting issue, allowing alternative parties to offer their support in a matter that had little salience with their electorates.[1]

Further, what assisted the Congress in its endeavour to finally sign a nuclear agreement with the United States in 2008, notwithstanding the opposition voiced by the BJP—the principal opposition party at the time—was that the BJP's position was ambiguous from the start. As a party that first initiated debates on nuclear-related matters with the United States soon after the 1998 tests, there was little merit in the party's resistance. This was purely a matter of political point-scoring. What did not help the BJP were cutting headlines in India's national dailies accusing the party of not having 'any real case against the nuclear deal'. Even Brajesh Mishra, National Security Adviser to Prime Minister Vajpayee, was convinced—although only in 2008—that the deal was

advantageous for India (Chaudhuri 2014: 240–5). In essence, what the debates around the nuclear deal demonstrated was that opposition demands need legitimacy of their own. The BJP could delay the deal by disrupting the house's proceedings, usurping close to 423 legislative hours in protest between 2004 and 2009, but an opposition's demands require merit, and an opposition too needs to win the support of those outside Parliament, doing its part to develop and nurture what might be considered to be reasoned argumentation (Chatterjee 2010: 200–1).

This was apparent in the period following the signing of the nuclear agreement. To be implemented, India was required to pass a Nuclear Liabilities Bill determining the levels of liability placed on a private actor—such as a multinational—investing and running a nuclear power plant in India. Here, the tables were turned. The Congress, keen to pass a bill as soon as possible, was willing to reduce liabilities to entice such multinational firms to soon invest in India. The BJP took a different view, one which had a lot more merit than its opposition to the nuclear deal with the United States. It played a key role in pushing the government to include clauses in the bill that ensured that legal action could be taken against suppliers in the event of an incident caused by malfunctioning equipment. Finally passed by both houses in 2010, these clauses were included—sections 17(b) and 46—in the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act. American companies and firms argued that these liabilities did not conform to international conventions dealing with nuclear damage, but with little or no effect (Dikshit 2014). US firms are unwilling to invest in a country where they argue they will be exposed to the risk of unlimited liabilities in the event of a Fukushima kind of incident. Interestingly, these liabilities were negotiated at the behest of the left—as a part of the opposition in Parliament following its withdrawal from the UPA—and the BJP in the Standing Committee on Science and Technology, prior to it being passed in the Lok Sabha. Importantly, the Standing Committee increased the operator's liability by three times to what the Congress originally proposed. It increased the period for claiming compensation—in case of suffering due to nuclear damage—from 10—as proposed by the Congress—to 20 years, and made provisions for Indian courts to hear appeals by those affected by nuclear damage. The Congress wanted to prevent civil courts from exercising their jurisdiction. Such pressures had a determined impact on the outcome. In this case, the importance of parliamentary oversight and the role of the Standing Committee were all too clear.

States and Foreign Policy

Apart from pressures at the national level, governments in the centre find themselves more and more susceptible to domestic compulsions in cases where state legislatures and regional political dynamics shape foreign policy priorities. This is not to say that states play a definitive role, but that regional preferences appear to have become that much more important to the executive at the centre.

Take for instance the case of the Indian Prime Minister's decision in November 2013 not to attend the annual Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Colombo. Since the so-called fourth Eelam War began in Sri Lanka (July 2006 to May 2009), Tamil parties in India strongly protested the manner and method in which the war was conducted by Sri Lankan Armed Forces. Whether for political gain or genuine concerns, the two principal parties (the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam and Dravida Munnettra Kazhagam) pushed the government at the centre to pressure Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapakse to protect civilians in the ongoing conflict. In March 2013, the Tamil Nadu Legislative Council passed a resolution asking the Indian government to enforce economic sanctions on Sri Lanka—for alleged war crimes and genocide. Further, both parties suggested that the United Nations should investigate allegations of genocide. There is little doubt that both the sentiment and reality of such opposition played its part in eventually dissuading the Prime Minister from leading the Indian delegation at CHOGM. The Foreign Minister instead led the Indian team. From the outset, whether or not Prime Minister Singh's decision is likely to adversely affect relations with Sri Lanka is less certain. What is clear is that regional demands are no longer those that can be wished away. As discussed above, there are no constitutional provisions to accommodate such demands. Foreign affairs remain in the Union List where the state has no legal jurisdiction. Yet, and at some level, that these demands get a hearing is evident. In 2012–13, the Congress-led Singh government backed out of negotiations—over water sharing rights—with Bangladesh because of the opposition from the Chief Minister of West Bengal. Such cases explicitly demonstrate the causal connection between the demands of the state and the nation's advance in foreign policy.

In turn, whilst a lot is made of the rising importance of states in the construction and implementation of foreign policy, the real impact on such goals is yet to be determined. For instance, in the matter of the states negotiating to borrow funds from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, the government at the centre—the chief underwriter of such loan applications—remains the key arbiter. Such loans and other forms of economic transactions with foreign entities require the approval of the national government, providing the centre with leverage. The case of Tamil Nadu and West Bengal aside, there is little to suggest that foreign policy priorities have been significantly limited by the wishes and fancies of state legislatures and the Chief Minister (Vaishnav 2013). This, however, should not take away from the need to broaden the boundaries of consensus. In 2014, Prime Minister Modi's government argued that it would ring-fence foreign policy from state-level interference. Such assumptions appear foolhardy. History shows that dissent and opposition cannot be wished away. Whether it is a government where one party alone enjoys a majority or a coalition, they are answerable to both the Parliament at the centre and those outside it.

Note

1. Articles were surveyed between 1 August 2007 and 1 October 2008. The sample of articles included 43 in the *Indian Express*, 45 in the *Times of India*, and 67 in *The Hindu*.

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CHAPTER 17

OFFICIALDOM

South Block and Beyond

TANVI MADAN

THE dictionary defines foreign policy as 'the policy of a sovereign state in its interaction with other sovereign states'.[1] In India's case, this interaction involves a range of subjects beyond traditional diplomacy, including those in the economic, energy, environment, defense, and diaspora realms. Consequently, the officialdom at the central level involved in the formulation, approval, and implementation of foreign policy includes a number of actors.

For these official Indian actors, a number of factors make foreign policy more complicated than it was in the past. The nature of policy issues at hand in the international realm has changed. There has been a blurring of vertical and horizontal policy-making lines, with most issues crossing functional areas and/or spanning foreign and domestic jurisdictions.[2] India's interests abroad have also increased; so has its footprint—not just through the activities of the government, but also of corporations and individuals. Furthermore, policy-makers have to deal with these issues in an environment where domestic politics, public opinion, and a vocal media shape their decision-making space.

The question of who makes foreign policy in India often starts and ends with a list of the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), the National Security Council (NSC), and the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) (Miller 2013: 15). However, just a glimpse of India's relations with other countries, or its international interactions on particular functional issues or during crises demonstrates that this is just the beginning of the list. Furthermore, there is the question not just of foreign policy formulation, but clearance and implementation to consider.

This chapter lays out the various actors involved in the Indian foreign policy process, providing examples of the kind and scale of their involvement and interaction with each other—though it does not cover Parliament or state-level officialdom that are covered elsewhere in this volume. Furthermore, it outlines the mechanisms for

coordination between the central actors. Finally, it explores some challenges inherent in the system, as well as criticisms leveled at it.

Cast of Characters

The Cabinet

The political body ultimately responsible for foreign policy-making is the Cabinet. The role of any minister other than the Foreign Minister on foreign policy issues, however, has varied according to the power and personality of the Prime Minister, the interests and relative power of other ministers, as well as the issues involved. Many consider India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, for example, as only informing the Cabinet as a whole of foreign policy decisions rather than actually involving them in the making of them (Bandyopadhyaya 1980: 178–80). However, even in the case of a powerful Prime Minister like Nehru, Cabinet members did express their views on foreign policy subjects. Indian Deputy Prime Minister Vallabhbhai Patel's differences with Nehru on the China policy are well known. Others expressed differences privately and publicly on subjects like India's reaction to the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956, or the question of foreign aid.[3] Indira Gandhi, when she was more vulnerable in the position of Prime Minister, found herself dealing with Cabinet colleagues with strong opinions on trade and economic liberalization (Mukherji 2000), as well as what stance India should take on multilateral negotiations on Vietnam (Madan 2012: 408–9). Overall, Cabinet members tended to be more vocal on issues involving India's neighbors, as well as those with a financial dimension.

More recently, when coalition governments have been in place, the views of Cabinet members—especially those representing coalition partners—have been critical in key instances. More often than not, this is the case on policy towards India's neighbors. The effect of domestic politics—coalition politics and the center–state dynamic—on the government's decision-making capacity was evident in constraining the ability of the central government to strike a deal with Bangladesh on the sharing of water from the River Teesta[4] and in shaping the decision that the Prime Minister would not attend the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Colombo.[5] Jha has noted that a coalition Cabinet, however, can also facilitate foreign policy-making in some cases, providing the example of the Gujral doctrine on neighborhood policy (Jha 2002: 238–9). Beyond the immediate neighborhood, Cabinet members can also have strong views on India's relations in West Asia (Mukherjee and Malone 2011: 91). Their influence can also be felt on functional issues such as multilateral trade negotiations, which involve the jurisdictions of various ministries and are thought to have domestic political implications. While earlier such views might have stayed within the Cabinet, with the changed media landscape, everyone

has a megaphone—one that policy-makers sometimes use to strengthen their hand in internal deliberations.

The Prime Minister's Office

Over time, the office of the head of the Cabinet—the PMO—has taken on a greater role in foreign policy-making. The PMO includes officials on deputation from the MEA, who serve as working-level advisors on foreign policy—especially on those issues in which the Prime Minister has a personal interest or those considered to need the highest level of attention. In addition, the Prime Minister can appoint envoys on particular issues or regions of importance. For example, in recent years there have been special envoys for climate change negotiations, the India–US nuclear talks, Afghanistan–Pakistan issues, as well as disarmament and non-proliferation. In the past, Indira Gandhi used an envoy to conclude discussions on the India–Soviet Friendship Treaty in 1971.

Prime Ministers can also appoint task forces to focus on particular issues. One on global strategic developments, for example, was set up in 2005 under the chairmanship of K. Subrahmanyam with members from outside government, but with the NSC secretariat (NSCS) providing support.[6]

There have been other mechanisms for Prime Ministers to exercise more control on foreign policy as well. In a few cases, heads of policy planning in MEA were given a minister of state rank and reported directly to the Prime Minister (e.g. D. P. Dhar in the 1970s, G. Parthasarathi in the 1980s) (Saksena 1996: 402). Some principal secretaries to the Prime Minister have also been influential as foreign policy advisors. Perhaps the most prominent was P. N. Haksar, who served in that role between 1967 and 1973 when Indira Gandhi was Prime Minister. Some have indeed identified her era as one of movement away from the MEA toward the PMO (Saksena 1996: 398). The relative influence of each has varied over time (with the power, interests, and style of functioning of the Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, National Security Advisor (NSA) and Foreign Secretary), but there have been more recent instances of principal secretaries being deeply involved in foreign policy formulation as well. For example, Brajesh Mishra, Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's principal secretary, was considered by some to have essentially functioned as NSA even before he took on that role formally (Talbott: 2006: 46).

National Security Council System

The NSC is chaired by the Prime Minister and its membership consists of the external affairs, defense, home, and finance ministers, as well as the deputy chairman of the Planning Commission. Depending on the issue being discussed, other ministers and officials can be invited to attend meetings of the NSC. For example, a meeting to discuss

India's relations with Nepal can include officials like the Chief of the Integrated Defense Staff, the Chief of Army Staff, as well as the principal secretary to the Prime Minister.[7] NSC meetings are held on an intermittent basis; there is no statutory requirement for the number of times it has to meet.

The NSC was established in 1999 by the Vajpayee government, after earlier failed efforts (Babu 2003: 216). It is a deliberative body. It does not have a mandate to make decisions, but rather to think through and discuss critical issues in an integrated, long-term fashion (broadly, seven such issues were outlined). Some cross-cutting foreign policy issues are successfully discussed in this forum. Others, considered by specific ministries such as those of home and defense to be 'their' issues, get less traction.

Also part of the NSC system is the NSA, the principal foreign and security policy advisor to the Prime Minister, who currently has the rank of a minister of state. The NSA was also envisioned as being 'the channel for servicing' the NSC.[8] In practice, on particular issues, the NSA has also arbitrated differences that arise between various parts of officialdom. He or she is assisted by a deputy national security advisor, who also holds the position of Secretary, NSCS. NSAs are 'political' appointments and not career positions. There have been five NSAs—three were previously in the Indian Foreign Service (IFS) and two were previously heads of the Intelligence Bureau. Deputy NSAs have also been former officials from different services, including the IFS and the Indian Police Service.

The PMO, NSC, and NSA are supported by the NSCS, which provides them briefings and advice. The NSCS was attached to the PMO in 2002. It consists of officers on deputation from various ministries and military and intelligence agencies, as well as individuals from outside the government on contract. The proportion of government to non-government officials in the NSCS has varied over time, depending on need and availability. Given its diverse membership, reports generated in the NSCS are thought to have the advantage of reflecting different perspectives and including information from various sources.

The NSCS also has intelligence and strategic components. As part of the constitution of the NSC system, the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC), which earlier reported to the Cabinet Secretariat, was folded into the NSCS (Babu 2003: 218). In addition, the strategy program staff within the NSCS aids the National Command Authority, which controls India's nuclear deterrent.[9]

Another body that is part of the NSC system is the National Security Advisory Board (NSAB). It has no executive authority; it is an advisory group with experts with different backgrounds from outside government. Its size has varied though it has tended to have over a dozen members; the limit is supposed to be 30. These members have included individuals from academia, media, think-tanks, the private sector, as well as those who have retired from positions in the administrative bureaucracy or military. The NSAB is officially constituted by the Prime Minister, though names are suggested by the NSA and the deputy NSA. Its mandate is to 'provid[e] long-term prognosis and analysis to the National Security Council and recommend ... solutions and policy options to the issues raised by them'. Some analysts have praised this body as a useful mechanism to bring in outside experts and a variety of non-official perspectives. Critics, however, have

questioned its independence, role, and relevance (Babu 2003: 226). Prominent NSAB products have included a draft nuclear doctrine in 1999.

Ministry of External Affairs

The lead ministry on most foreign policy issues is the MEA. It is headed at the political level by a union minister (or EAM in official parlance) and one or more ministers of state. Within the Cabinet, the position of EAM is considered significant. In a number of instances, sitting Prime Ministers such as Nehru, P. V. Narasimha Rao, Vajpayee, and Manmohan Singh have also held this position, albeit for different durations. In coalition governments, with rare exceptions, the single largest party has kept the portfolio, reflecting its traditional significance and the importance given to foreign policy issues, as well as the sense that these issues deserve attention at the highest level. The relative power of the EAM has varied depending on the Prime Minister's interest and preferences, as well as the relative level of influence and expertise of the person holding the office.

Initially after independence, a secretary general led the ministry at the bureaucratic level. That position, however, was discontinued in 1964. Since then, the Foreign Secretary (FS) has been the seniormost bureaucrat in the ministry, responsible for overall supervision and coordination. The FS is appointed for a two-year term. He or she is aided at the top by a secretary (West) and a secretary (East), whose portfolios are geographically divided but do not include the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, as well as India's neighboring countries. Those continue to be the responsibility of the FS, as are other issues and countries identified. For example, the current FS's portfolio also includes the Development Partnership Administration, and relations with Germany and Japan. Recently, the position of secretary (Economic Relations) has been reinstituted to coordinate and supervise policy related to energy security, food security, investment and technology promotion, multilateral economic diplomacy (including through organizations like the World Trade Organization (WTO) and groupings like the BRICS), public diplomacy, legal issues and treaties, and archives and record management.[10]

Below the secretary level, additional secretaries are responsible for various functional issue areas. Below that level, joint secretaries lead territorial or functional divisions and are considered to be a key node between the upper and lower (directors, deputy secretaries, under secretaries) levels of the ministry, as well as between ministries. The number of divisions has varied over time: with regions or issues rising to the forefront, new divisions can and have been created (for example, for energy security and development assistance). From January 1978 when there were 18 joint secretaries at the ministry (Bandyopadhyaya 1980: 195), today there are nearly 50.

Bureaucratic positions in the MEA are largely staffed by officers of the IFS, a service established just before independence to conduct Indian diplomatic, consular, and commercial activities abroad. In terms of numbers, estimates vary depending on the source

but the ministry lists 3,962 existing posts.[11] Others have listed 900 IFS 'A' and 3,000 IFS 'B' officers serving the ministry and the 169 overseas missions and consulates (Tharoor 2012: 319). Some officers from other services such as the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) serve on deputation in the MEA as well, for example, in financial positions. Some political leaders have also been known to bring in officers on special duty (OSD) from outside of government.[12] In addition, MEA officials reach out to outside experts, depending on need (how critical the issue is, the shortfall within (Routray 2013: 16)). There has been some consideration at the political level of bringing in more outsiders, especially with expertise on trade and economic affairs.[13] Overall, there continues to be very limited lateral entry into the ministry, but those entering the IFS include engineers, doctors, and individuals with management degrees.

The MEA bureaucracy can play a role in both formulation and implementation. Its activities range from reporting to generating notes and recommendations, as well as day-to-day diplomacy (Bandyopadhyaya 1980: 199–213). Broad principles, policy guidelines, and operating frameworks still come from the top. Application of those guidelines and day-to-day operations are delegated lower down. Level of interest and intervention from the higher levels depends on the issues involved. In the case of certain critical relationships and issues, political and senior bureaucratic officials provide direction—even while tactics might be left to other officials (Malone 2011: 7). On other issues, officials at the working level have more autonomy and flexibility. There is a set hierarchy, but there can be 'level-jumping' with directions and reporting not necessarily going up and down every level (Saksena 1996: 395). Joint secretaries, for example, often work directly with the secretary concerned or sometimes even directly with the minister.

Other Ministries and Agencies

A series of other ministries play a role in both foreign policy formulation and, significantly, its implementation. The *Ministry of Defense* (MoD) and the *military services* are involved through their expertise on defense issues, key role in defense procurement and peacekeeping operations, service as military attaches in Indian missions around the world, as well as military diplomacy, especially as India helps build capacity in other nations. They also play a role during crises, for example, those at the borders and those involving the evacuation of Indian citizens in crisis zones. They perhaps have a greater voice on developments and issues relating to the neighborhood (Malone 2011: 70). This is also the case in certain relationships where the defense dimension is crucial, such as those with Israel and Russia. Bilateral interactions such as those with Japan and the United States also include military input and participation. As India seeks to act further afield, especially in the maritime domain, the military's area of interest and involvement might expand. More often than not, however, there are criticisms that the military services especially are not involved enough. In recent years, former military officials have played a role in shaping the public debate on foreign policy through the media, for

example, on the question of potential Indian participation in the Iraq War (Chaudhuri 2014: 198–9).

Inputs from a number of *intelligence agencies* also feed into policy-making on India's external relations. These agencies include the Intelligence Bureau under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), the Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW) in the Cabinet Secretariat, the JIC, National Technical Research Organization and Aviation Research Center that report to the NSA, as well as the Defense Intelligence Agency and various military intelligence bodies. Financial intelligence comes from bodies such as the Financial Intelligence Unit and the Enforcement Directorate under the Ministry of Finance, as well as units within the Income Tax and Customs and Central Excise departments.[14] Like the defense agencies, the intelligence agencies' impact can be both direct through a seat at the table and indirect through their input into others' deliberations and documents.

Foreign trade policy-making is first and foremost the prerogative of the *Ministry of Commerce and Industry* (MoCI). The commerce ministry takes the lead in 'setting and defining policy' on trade issues (Narayan 2005: 7), and in trade facilitation. It also is the main ministry involved in bilateral, regional, and multilateral trade negotiations. Due to the range of subjects covered, however, other ministries such as agriculture, external affairs, finance, and textiles also play a role in trade negotiations.

The ministry has officers posted to various Indian missions abroad to take the lead on commercial work. In some cases, positions are designated for them. For example, the Indian representative to UNCTAD and the deputy permanent representative to the UN office in Geneva are from the commerce ministry (Saksena 1996: 398–9). Indian delegates to the WTO in Geneva are also commerce ministry appointees (Ramdasi 2010: 26). Seeking an even larger role, the commerce ministry had proposed the creation of a foreign service of its own, with officers posted at missions who would report directly to the Commerce Secretary in Delhi;[15] MEA objections, however, scuttled this proposal. Some have suggested merging the foreign and commerce ministries (or at least the latter's foreign trade divisions), citing the examples of Australia and Canada (Malik and Medcalf 2011: 9). Others believe that this model would not work in India's case and that instead the MEA should take the lead on international trade policy (Sen 2004: 20, 49). Yet others have stated that the MEA should be split into diplomacy and trade and commerce departments.[16]

The *Ministry of Finance* (MoF) and its officials on their part are involved in economic diplomacy—both bilateral and in multilateral organizations such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. With the interconnectedness of the global economy (as well as India's links to it), and fiscal policy increasingly being discussed among nations, including in forums such as the G-20, the MoF's role abroad has increased. Such discussions can also involve the *Planning Commission*—depending on its status within the government, particularly with the Prime Minister—and the central bank (in monetary policy discussions, for example).The MoF is also involved in approving budgets for other ministries that are involved in India's external relations, including the foreign and defense ministries. It, too, posts officials at missions around the

world—Minister (Economic) and Counselor (Economic) positions, for example, are manned by MoF officials.

Another agency that plays a role in shaping trade and investment activities—thus having an impact on foreign policy—is the *Ministry of Environment and Forests* (MoEF). It also plays a lead role in climate change discussions and a key role in discussions about Indian energy policy. It can also touch on India's relations with its neighbors through its ability to nix or delay border infrastructure building projects (e.g. in the case of China[17]).

The *Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas* (MPNG) has increasingly become involved internationally as India's imports of oil and gas have grown, and as Indian oil and gas companies (including state-owned ones administered by MPNG) acquire or seek to acquire more assets abroad. The ministry has an international cooperation division headed by a joint secretary. This division conducts oil diplomacy—supporting state-owned companies in their efforts to acquire assets abroad, participating in multilateral energy discussions, engaging with resource-rich states, as well as exploring project proposals, such as those for international gas pipelines.[18] With imports only likely to increase and Indian oil and gas companies involved in nearly two dozen countries, this ministry's involvement and interest is not likely to wane. For similar reasons, these days the *Coal Ministry* also has international interests and engagements, as does the *Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.*

Also involved because of its security responsibilities, albeit largely internal ones, is the *Home Ministry*. It plays a role in counter-terrorism cooperation, intelligence sharing (through its control of the domestic Intelligence Bureau), as well as capacity building in other states. It is also involved in foreign policy through its role in activities such as visa processing and granting Foreign Currency Regulation Act clearance to Indian and foreign non-governmental organizations based in India that receive funding from abroad.

One of the newest ministries on the block—the *Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs* (MOEA)—has also begun to play a role. The Indian diaspora—both non-resident Indians and persons of Indian origin—has grown (to nearly 22 million as of 2012[19]). With improvements in communication technology and easier travel, their links in and to India have also increased. The approach of the government to its citizens abroad has also changed, going from a policy of distance to active engagement—sometimes not voluntary but driven by domestic pressure. This has been evident in the government's involvement on the issues of the treatment of Indian students in Australia (Malik and Medcalf 2011: 11), as well as in a child custody battle in Norway involving an Indian couple.[20]

India's Missions Abroad

India has over 160 missions abroad. Chiefs of mission are generally career foreign service officers, though governments have put in place 'political appointees' in major capitals. This practice was more common in the initial years of independence when individuals like Vijayalakshmi Pandit, S. Radhakrishnan, and V. K. Krishna Menon

served abroad. There have also been recent cases of political appointments. For example, Naresh Chandra, who had retired from the IAS, served in Washington, DC, and lawyer L. M. Singhvi served in London. Sometimes these positions are given to former IFS officers (as in the case of Nirupama Rao in Washington, DC, and Ranjan Mathai in London—both former foreign secretaries).

Below the level of ambassador or high commissioner or permanent representative are a deputy chief of mission, ministers, counselors, first secretaries, second secretaries, and third secretaries. While the chief of mission heads the mission, not all reporting to Delhi happens through him or her. As mentioned above, the MEA is not the only ministry to have officers stationed abroad in these positions and some report directly to their agencies. In some cases, there are more non-IFS officers serving at a mission than IFS officers—indeed a former IFS officer complained about this in the case of the Indian embassy in Washington.[21] Most missions also have local employees.

Coordination

With the involvement of so many actors, the question of coordination is natural. It is not uncommon to hear analysts state that there is no coordination in Indian foreign policy (Saksena 1996: 399). While one might question the kind or extent of coordination, it is an exaggeration to say that there is none. There are indeed various mechanisms for coordination across agencies. One mechanism is informal. This essentially involves communicating directly with one's counterparts in other divisions or agencies on a case-by-case basis. An MEA joint secretary, for example, can call his or her counterpart in another agency and share information or get another ministry's perspective or buy-in on a particular issue. This practice is facilitated by the fact that officers know their 'batchmates' across services with whom they spent time during training, as well as by the relatively small size of each batch. If the communication needs to be less informal, it can be through a demi-official or DO letter.

There are also various formal mechanisms for coordination. The Cabinet is the highest-level standing inter-agency body. Its committees, supported by the Cabinet Secretariat, play a key coordinating role. Issues of cross-cutting impact are brought up in the Cabinet committees, which are venues for coordinating policies and resolving conflicts. On issues of foreign and security policy, the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS), which is chaired by the Prime Minister and includes the defense, external affairs, finance, and home ministers, is the most relevant body. The CCS takes decisions on issues such as defense procurement.[22] While there is some overlapping membership, the CCS is distinct from the NSC. The CCS is a sanctioning or decision-making body, while the NSC is a deliberative one. The CCS meets on a more frequent basis, but it is also smaller than the NSC. The latter can involve a wider range of actors and is one of the few bodies in which the leadership of the military services can be present.

On economic or energy-related matters, including those that touch on foreign policy, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) is also active. For example, the CCEA—acting on recommendations from the Foreign Investment Promotion Board—approves or rejects foreign direct investment proposals.[23] The CCEA also plays a crucial role in the approval process of any major investment abroad by a state-owned oil and gas company.

Coordination and integration can also take place through the PMO, NSA, and NSCS, as well as the Committee of Secretaries (CoS), which brings together the seniormost bureaucrats from ministries involved in certain issues.

Other than the standing bodies, there are also groups of ministers, or task forces at the bureaucratic level that can be created to handle particular issues. For example, to assess and advise on the follow-up to the 2005 civil nuclear agreement with the United States, a working group headed by the FS was formed, with representation from the NSCS, MEA, and Department of Atomic Energy (DAE).[24] In addition, there are issue-specific bodies (like the Energy Coordination Committee, the Trade and Economic Relations Committee, or the Council on Climate Change) that bring together some of the stakeholders.

Ministries can and do call together ad hoc inter-agency consultations on particular issues as well. For example, the MEA brought together the energy-related ministries and departments to discuss energy initiatives abroad.[25] A joint MEA–MPNG task force offered another example of this type of cooperation. It was created by the ministries in preparation for the petroleum minister's 2006 visit to China, during which the two countries signed a number of memoranda of understanding (Aiyar 2005: 37). Sometimes these initiatives are taken not just for coordination, but also to protect one's policy-making turf.

Coordination on a single issue can involve various mechanisms. For example, a former official has noted that while foreign trade policy might be formulated by the commerce ministry, there are inter-ministerial consultations that include the agriculture, external affairs, finance, and textiles ministries. Trade negotiations positions are usually recommended by MoCI, approved at the CoS level, and then cleared by the CCEA (Sen 2004: 22). A group of ministers—agriculture, commerce, finance, foreign—also advises the Prime Minister in the lead-up to key trade negotiations, and negotiating strategies and positions are discussed in Cabinet (Narayan 2005: 7). Furthermore, negotiating delegations themselves comprise officials from various ministries.

Coordination occurs not necessarily out of choice, but often due to necessity given the multiple jurisdictions involved, the fact that no one ministry has a monopoly on the range of expertise required, as well as the buy-in required of various agencies, especially in the implementation of foreign policy.

Challenges

With the involvement of multiple official actors, various problems or challenges have arisen. One challenge has been that of the 'diffusion of authority' between these actors.

This has been especially evident between the PMO, NSC, MEA, and MoD. It has led to clashes between the PMO and EAMs or FSs, including in the case of Brajesh Mishra and Jaswant Singh (Talbott 2006: 151).[26]

A related problem has been turf wars. This was evident, for example, in the mid-to-late 2000s between MPNG and the MEA on the question of India's international energy activities—and partly led to each forming its own unit to focus on the subject. There is also the problem of turf protection, with agencies trying to keep other departments out of their policy-making space. For example, in 1994 a PMO team reportedly went to London for talks with US officials on nuclear issues—keeping the MEA out of the loop (Saksena 1996: 402–3). Commerce ministry officials, guarding their trade negotiating prerogatives, have been known to turn down requests for senior officials from other ministries to be included in delegations.[27]

Another inherent challenge is that different parts of officialdom have different interests and assessment of priorities—the classic case of 'where you stand depends on where you sit'. For example, after the India–US nuclear deal of 2005, when nuclear separation plans were being discussed by PMO, NSCS, MEA, DAE, and the military, the PMO and the MEA were willing to concede certain points since they prioritized the relationship with the United States. The DAE, with more parochial interests, was on a different page (Mistry 2006: 686). Another example was the different public stances taken by the MEA and MOIA following attacks on Indian students in Australia. In another case, different MEA and MHA perspectives led to delays in issuing research visas for foreign scholars and students, affecting, according to an FS, India's ability to 'build constituencies' abroad.[28]

Another challenge involves coordination, which some argue is insufficient (Khilnani et al. 2012: 30). Institutionally, it takes place mostly at the higher levels of government.[29] Coordination at lower levels can be 'discretionary' and 'selective'—essentially, left to personal initiative and networks (Sen 2004: 25; Saksena 1996: 401). While this system can work, it can sometimes mean that a policy that emanates from one ministry does not get feedback from the others until it reaches a higher level. If others at that level disagree, it is back to the drawing board for everyone. Others express concern that much coordination and consultation is post-facto—designed to generate support for a stated position from another ministry rather than to seek its input (Sen 2004: 23).

The lack of institutionalized coordination at different levels can mean that crucial stakeholders can be left out of the policy formulation process, hindering their participation at the implementation stage. It can harm India's ability to make sustainable international commitments or deliver on them. Whether the exclusion of actors is deliberate or unintentional, it can also hurt India at some international negotiating tables if those actors have particularly valuable expertise.[30]

There is also the related issue of integration, which is more difficult without coordination. The government cannot effectively play a global 'chess grandmasters' game, where each move will have to be mindful of several other pieces on the board and the game is played as part of a long 'strategic interaction'—as some have argued it needs to (Khilnani et al. 2012: 9)—if it cannot keep track of the pieces. On the flip side, improved

coordination—and integration—can allow priorities to be identified and tradeoffs to be considered. Better coordination at home can also lead to better outcomes abroad.

Criticisms

There are a number of criticisms leveled at the officialdom and processes involved in foreign policy—many not very different from those leveled at such actors and processes around the world. One criticism is that officialdom tends to be status quo, with little-to-no policy innovation sought or achieved. A second is that foreign policy is too reactive (Saksena 1996: 403; Routray 2013: 2). A third, as mentioned above, is the lack of coordination within and among ministries, as well as between missions or delegations abroad and Delhi (Ramdasi 2010: 27). A fourth is about integration, with criticism that various parts of India's foreign policy officialdom function in a siloed fashion, with little assessment of the impact of one's actions on the other or on India's larger interests (Khilnani et al. 2012: 63).[31]

A fifth is the lack of capacity, with a number of observers noting that India's external commitments dwarf its capacity. The criticism often focuses on the relatively small size of the IFS, but there are also concerns about capacity issues related to other parts of officialdom (Markey 2009; Malone 2011: 7; Tharoor 2012: 319; Routray 2013: 29). There is also concern about available expertise, as well as the system's capacity to deal with domestic politics and public opinion and to grapple with the changes wrought by the blurring of both horizontal and vertical policy-making lines (Madan 2013: 97–8).

Another criticism is that officialdom is insular and opaque, with little-to-no lateral entry and limited effort to harness expertise available in the academic, think-tank, and corporate sectors (Sen 2004: 28; Routray 2013: 7). Others have criticized the exclusion of actors in the decision-making process, especially the military and its service chiefs—though this is often focused on the security policy arena rather than the foreign policy one (Kanwal 2012: 1; Routray 2013: 30).

Some criticize the lack of organizations, such as the lack of institutional capacity to plan and monitor relations across a spectrum of issues (Saksena 1996: 395) or 'synthesise and harmonise the interests of the multiplicity of actors' (Routray 2013: 2). Others have criticized the use and limits of existing organizations. For example, there are criticisms about the NSC barely meeting (Kanwal 2012: 1), as well as arguments that it has not been given full powers and has limited ability to facilitate coordination and ensure implementation (Pant 2009: 99). There are specific criticisms of the MEA beyond lack of capacity—for example, that it has bodies like a Coordination Division which are ineffective, that it is full of generalists rather than specialists, that the strength of the organizational culture can be limiting, and that sometimes individual diplomats go rogue, taking positions not in line with those of the center (Bandyopadhyaya 1980: 276; Saksena 1996: 395–8; Tharoor 2012: 321–2; Routray 2013: 7).

Conclusion

Overall, the complexity of the foreign policy realm has meant more actors getting involved; and the greater number of actors involved has made foreign policy-making more complex. The official system that has to deal with this complexity has not remained static. New organizations like the NSC have been established. New and existing actors have been accommodated into the system, often out of necessity rather than choice. Processes have changed (for example, the MoEF rather than the MEA taking the lead on many climate change or environmental negotiations). Capacity additions have been made in the MEA. There has been a greater willingness to reach outside government for expertise and advice. There is a lot left to be done to make the system more effective, however, and whether continued change will be reactive or proactive remains an open question.

Notes

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CHAPTER 18

THE PRIVATE SECTOR

RAJIV KUMAR

Introduction

The question of the Indian private sector having a role in the design of the country's foreign policy would not have even arisen prior to 1990. That the issue merits a discussion today is perhaps due to the unprecedented dynamism of the Indian private sector since the mid-1990s and the extraordinary potential for growth and spirit for expansion it has demonstrated over the last two decades. This was not always the case. In fact, during the first three decades after independence (until the mid-1980s), it had virtually no role in any aspect of India's foreign policy. This was a due to several factors.

First, the relatively closed and autarkic development model adopted by India during the first three decades after independence (1950–80) permitted only a limited scope for interaction with the external world. Second, the predominance of public sector enterprises in the Indian corporate sector during this period meant that the private sector's voice was quite marginalized.[1] Third, in line with the relatively smaller share of the private sector in the overall economy, the role of their representative organizations, like the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in its earlier incarnation as the Association of Indian Engineering Industry (AIEI) and the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) was also rather marginal.[2]

Fourth, the overall global environment of the Cold War period that existed all through these three decades saw India emerge as a leader of the Non-Aligned Movement with a somewhat sharp 'anti-imperialist' rhetoric which effectively tilted it towards the socialist bloc led by the Soviet Union. This was later cemented with the signing of the strategic alliance treaty with the Soviet Union in the run-up to the Indo-Pakistani war of 1971. This geostrategic stance of the Indian government virtually ruled out any role for the private sector in external affairs as it was seen with a degree of suspicion by the public-sector-dominated policy stance of the period.

Fifth and perhaps most importantly, during those three decades, the Indian private sector was in effect fighting an existential struggle with its back to the wall against the dominant pro-state capitalist (or some would think of it as centrally planned and socialist) ideology and policy stance of the government. Its share in the economy was being actively whittled away with the expansion of the public sector, including by nationalization of existing private sector enterprises in major sectors like banking and coal (1969–73). The 'licence-quota Raj' that reached its most dysfunctional peaks in the 1970s, saw the private sector becoming completely subservient to and dependent for its existence on the government (Panagariya 2008: 47–77). This was not an environment in which the private sector could be expected to play even a marginal role in either the formulation or execution of foreign policy in India.

The scene began to change by mid-1980s when Rajiv Gandhi, who took over as Prime Minister in 1984, began the slow process of economic liberalization that included the rolling back of some of the more pernicious aspects of the 'licence-quota Raj'. This resulted in the more rapid growth of the private sector and its expansion in areas hitherto reserved for the public sector. The share of the private sector in the Indian economy has since increased significantly and expanded also to the social and physical infrastructure during the 'noughties', thereby giving it relatively much greater area of operation and capital accumulation. Greater external sector openness has also seen the expansion of the Indian private sector in other countries and the emergence of Indian multinationals (MNCs). Consequently, the period since the mid-1980s has seen a far greater interaction between the Indian and the global economy with the private sector also expanding its operations and presence overseas (Joshi and Little 1998). The period has also witnessed India adopting a more active and assertive role in multilateral trade negotiations, starting with the Uruguay Round. India has become more accommodative towards the formation of regional trade blocs like the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and entered into other regional and bilateral free trade agreements (FTAs) and comprehensive economic cooperation pacts. It can, therefore, be asserted that the material and political economy basis for the Indian private sector's role in India's foreign policy emerged only since the latter half of the 1980s.

In this context, the central argument of this chapter is that with barely three decades of real experience in this role, the Indian private sector is still finding its feet and at this time is unable to exercise any tangible influence on foreign policy except in some instances where its stance converges with the official stance. It has a more visible and effective role in the software and cyber sectors, which emerged after the liberalization of the 1990s and where Indian private companies have been externally oriented since the very inception. Going forward, some necessary conditions have to be achieved for the private sector to exert influence on the foreign policy in line with its increasing economic clout and share in the economy. These conditions are just getting in place but the direction is irreversible and in the coming period a more robust, independent,, and globally engaged Indian private sector will presumably exercise an enhanced influence on foreign policy.

A Suggested Typology

It will be useful to follow the typology developed in Kumar and Kumar (2010), *In the National Interest: A Strategic Foreign Policy for India*, to understand the rather limited extent of the private sector's (defined here as the corporate sector, including both the private and public sector enterprises and their representative organizations and excluding civil society organizations) role in India's foreign policy (Kumar and Kumar 2010). According to Kumar and Kumar, India's foreign policy framework can be seen as having three distinct components: security, economic prosperity, and global public goods. The security component of foreign policy covers the entire panoply of issues that relate principally to the managing of India's political relations with individual countries (or blocs if relevant) with the objective of safeguarding the country's sovereignty, its territorial integrity, and internal security. These policies have been traditionally determined ostensibly by the political leadership of the country, starting with the first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, who virtually single-handedly laid down India's geostrategic security policy. Subsequently, the elite Indian Foreign Service (IFS) that makes up the senior diplomatic core of the country has had a much larger role in the formulation of these policies and often without a clear strategic direction from the top.[3] To most observers the formulation and execution of the security-related aspects of India's foreign policy appear to be a tightly closed shop run by the IFS hierarchy. This is breached in exceptional circumstances (and apparently resented) when powerful outsiders, such as G. Parthasarthy, K. B. Lall, Naresh Chandra, and a few others, have managed to exert some tangible influence. However, all these either belonged to the sister Indian Civil/Administrative Service or acted on behalf of their political masters whose confidence they enjoyed. But in no case were 'outside agencies and organizations'—including quite surprisingly even the think-tanks spawned by the Ministry of the External Affairs (MEA) or the Ministry of Defence (MoD), let alone autonomous think-tanks—allowed to claim any influence on the formulation or execution of the security or geostrategic aspects of India's foreign policy. In these circumstances, it is easily seen that the private corporate sector was and remains completely shut out of this aspect of the country's foreign policy.

The second component of foreign policy, whose importance has expectedly increased since the liberalization of the mid-1980s has been the pursuit of economic prosperity, encapsulated in the objective of achieving rapid and sustained economic growth. Kumar and Kumar have strongly argued that this component should be the principal and even the exclusive focus of India's foreign policy for the next few decades. Successfully achieving this objective will alone provide the material basis for India to ensure its external and internal security, safeguard its sovereignty, and meet its aspirations for a greater role in global political and economic governance including a permanent position in the UN Security Council. It is gratifying to note that this position has been endorsed by Prime Ministers Manmohan Singh and Narendra Modi.

It is unarguable that in the coming period, India will become increasingly integrated with the global economy. This will hopefully imply a sharper focus of foreign policy on

economic issues. Given the trend of the increasing share of the private sector in economic activity and its rising interests in accessing foreign markets, technologies, and financial resources, the role of the private sector in India's foreign policy is only likely to increase. This provides the context of the discussion in the next section in which I argue that the private sector has to get its act together to be able to play a more effective role to ensure that India's foreign policy remains focused on this objective and is in line with the aspirations and interests of the Indian private sector.

With growing interdependence and shrinking of global strategic, economic, environmental, and natural resources space, the role of global public goods is becoming more important. Global public goods are defined as those aspects of international activity in which the action of any one player affects others and its own degrees of freedom for policy action are significantly constrained by the action of others. These are thus in the nature of externalities which can be tackled only through collective action and, as in all cases of externalities, allow the possibility of free riding by individual countries. Nuclear disarmament, global climate change, drugs and human trafficking, and pandemics are some key examples of global public goods where the global community has endeavoured with varying success to come up with collective solutions. Some global governance and regulatory institutions like the multilateral trade regulations overseen by the World Trade Organization (WTO), the international banking rules governed by the Basle Conventions, the global macroeconomic framework supervised by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the intellectual property regime governed by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), and the International Court of Justice and others provide the institutional edifice for global economic, technological, and commercial flows and interaction. It has not traditionally been India's practice to adopt a 'free rider' stance towards negotiations which determine the nature of agreements governing the conduct of these global public goods. As its influence increases in the future, the private sector could ask for a review of this policy stance to ascertain if there are some global public goods negotiations in which it is cost effective for India to become a free rider. On others, where India cannot simply be a 'rule taker' and its interests are vitally affected by the emerging global architecture, the private sector has begun to participate in the preparation of India's negotiating stance and is likely to the do so increasingly in the future as well. This will again require that the private sector creates the research, analytical and negotiating capability to play its expected role in India's intervention in the negotiations on global public goods.

The Private Sector and India's Economic and Commercial Policy

As argued above, the beginning of the private sector's influence on India's foreign economic and commercial policy (henceforth foreign economic policy) can be traced

back to the mid-1980s when economic liberalization was initiated by the Rajiv Gandhi government. From the mid-1980s until the present time, the private sector's role/influence in Indian foreign economic policy can be divided into three phases. The first phase would broadly overlap with the two Congress-led governments of Rajiv Gandhi and P. V. Narasimha Rao from 1984 to 1996. The second phase, which saw a further strengthening of this role coincided with the tenure of the Atal Bihari Vajpayee-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government from 1998 to 2004. The final current phase started in May 2004 with the coming to office of Dr Manmohan Singh's United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government and continues with the most recent NDA government led by Mr Modi.

The private sector initially opposed even the limited liberalization measures ushered in by Rajiv Gandhi's government in the mid-1980s. The opposition, most comprehensively expressed by the 'Bombay Club' led by Rahul Bajaj and some other big business leaders based in Mumbai, took the view that greater openness to imports and foreign direct investment (FDI) should only follow and not precede domestic reforms. The apprehension was that in the absence of required domestic reforms, the Indian private sector would be overrun by foreign competition, with adverse consequences for indigenous entrepreneurship and employment. However, the opposition faded away rather quickly as divisions appeared within the industry with the more progressive segment led by the CII deciding to support liberalization measures.[4]

The private sector's involvement in foreign economic policy received a major fillip with the invitation by Rajiv Gandhi to a group of 18 senior industrialists to accompany him on his state visit to the Soviet Union in 1985.[5] The industrialists met with their counterparts and also met with Rajiv Gandhi while still in Moscow for a feedback and review session, which presumably provided input to the official talks.

The mid-1980s, however, saw the first tangible case of the private sector influencing government's negotiating stance on trade related intellectual property (TRIPs) issues, which emerged as one of the more contentious issues in the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations (Subramanian 1999). The private producers of generic drugs lobbied hard and successfully to keep TRIPs outside the negotiated mandate of the Uruguay Round for a considerable period. Even when an agreement was finalized, the Indian negotiators, with active support from the private sector producers, were successful in diluting the agreement considerably.[6] As I will argue later, the private sector's influence in this case as in others was due to the convergence of its interest with the government's own geopolitical goals in projecting India as the leader of G-77, the group representing developing and emerging economies. Overall, it can be said that given the rather limited and very initial stage of India's economic liberalization and almost negligible foreign presence of the Indian private sector during this first phase, India's foreign policy remained dominated by 'security and high political issues' and the private sector's influence was correspondingly quite marginal.

The second phase under Prime Minister Vajpayee, virtually started with Pokhran II (May 1998), saw India being faced with international economic sanctions and a marked cooling off of government to government (G2G) relations between India and major

global powers. In this context, the role of Track II diplomacy by the private sector (most often under the aegis of the CII) came to the fore. The first important instance was the initiation of an Indo-US Track II Strategic Dialogue in 2002 led by Ratan Tata and Henry Kissinger from the two sides.[7] The Indo-US Strategic Dialogue was followed by similar initiatives with Singapore, Japan, Israel, Malaysia, Pakistan, and China.

The NDA government was apparently more open to and receptive of the private sector's involvement and views in framing its foreign economic and commercial policies. Other than the private sector's involvement in bilateral economic interactions as discussed above, it was reflected in the NDA government's initiative in 1999 led by the then commerce minister Murasoli Maran to actively involve the private sector in successive iterations of WTO's Doha Round negotiations. The government effectively used the private sector's openly expressed and strong opposition to the inclusion of Singapore issues (environment, labour standards, and trade-related investment measures) to push back the initiatives of the advanced (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)) economies on these issues.

Since 1999, it has become regular government practice to involve private sector organizations and business leaders in bilateral and regional trade negotiations. The private sector is regularly consulted in the process of framing the negotiation issues but not as regularly during the process of negotiations itself.

It is quite evident that the Track II dialogue contributed to the restoration of normal ties between India and the United States, the lifting of economic sanctions and subsequently to the Bush administration's bold decision to sign the Indo-US Civilian Nuclear Treaty, and India's successful defence of its negotiating positions in the WTO. But it is difficult to gauge the extent of the private sector's influence both because of the 'off-the-record' nature of these dialogues and the lack of any objective assessment of their contribution to the official G2G negotiations.

Global climate change negotiations have been somewhat of an exception from this general picture because the private sector has led the way in India on developing adaptive and mitigating measures for reducing the carbon intensity of economic activity.[8] As a result of the analytical and practical leadership position, private sector representatives have always been members of official delegations to global climate change negotiations, in Rio de Janeiro, Copenhagen, and Durban. They have been consulted rather extensively by the Ministry of Environment in the formulation of India's negotiating positions both under the aegis of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) or the Climate Change Summit process. But here again, in the experience of FICCI and the Confederation of British Industry's (CBI) initiative of an Indo-UK CEO's Forum on Climate Change, the actual impact of the private sector position on India's official negotiating stance remains unclear.

It is worth pointing out that in nearly all major foreign economic policy cases like the Indo-US Track II dialogue, the Doha Round of WTO negotiations, global climate change negotiations, and bilateral and regional trade negotiations, the role of the private sector was evidently supportive of and supplementary to the ongoing high-level G2G interaction. Even at the height of their proximity to the NDA government and

involvement in the working out of foreign economic policy, at no stage and not on any specific negotiating issue, was the private sector's role either substitutive of the official initiatives nor apparently did they succeed in changing the direction of official policy. For example, the Indo-US Track II Dialogue started nearly three years after the beginning of the much-discussed 'Jaswant Singh–Strobe Talbott talks' on restoring Indo-US bilateral relations; all private sector inputs on global climate change were fully supportive of and in line with India's official position. Once again, the earlier conclusion is reinforced that the Indian private sector's efforts in economic diplomacy perhaps follow the signal from the government and its influence is tangible only when its own stance and direction is in sync with the official policy and negotiating stance. The private sector seems to have played more of a facilitating role in improving the ambience and environment for bilateral or multilateral negotiations rather than contributing substantially to the direction, content, and nature of these relations.[9]

The third phase began in 2004 with the coming into office of the UPA government. The most important foreign policy initiative during the first term of the UPA government was by far the signing of the Indo-US Civilian Nuclear Treaty in July 2005. This was a result of intensive and high-level G2G interaction and the role of the private sector, if any, was to drum up support for the treaty within India.

The state of Track II private sector dialogues had deteriorated by 2005 (when I first saw the private sector's role in economic diplomacy at first hand). The CII's efforts at Track II diplomacy were supplemented by other chambers like FICCI, ASSOCHAM, and the Indian Chamber of Commerce, Kolkata.[10] These chambers envied the CII's role in these negotiations which brought it in close working relationship with government departments, in particular the Ministry of External Affairs and Department of Commerce. So they tried and succeeded in securing a role for themselves in Track II interactions with their counterparts in partner countries and participation in business delegations accompanying senior government leaders to other countries. Given the marked difference in the ability of the various chambers in mobilizing the big names in the business world (with the CII leading the field by a wide margin) the dialogues handled by other chambers neither received the desired attention from the policy-makers nor could they generate sufficient media interest to influence public opinion.

The one exception has been the global cyber/internet security negotiations in which the private sector has evidently had a tangible influence on the government's negotiating and participation stance. This has clearly been a result of the private sector being relatively ahead of the public sector or bureaucratic understanding of the issues in the cyber field than they were in climate change and environment. The government has actively sought and taken on board the private sector's contributions in global internet governance even when its evolving position has been somewhat at variance with the stand taken by the private sector.[11] The role of the National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM) has been quite different from other chambers and industry associations as it has been representative of the broadest segment of the software and information technology enabled services (ITES) industry from its very inception; it has developed significant in-house research and analytical capabilities

and provided 'idea leadership' to the concerned government ministries and agencies. This is quite in contrast to the more traditional chambers and has allowed the private sector to regularly influence policy, largely targeted at foreign markets in line with an export share of 80 per cent in software sector revenues.

The current and third phase in the evolution of the private sector's role has thus seen a sharp increase in the frequency of events organized by private sector organizations in support of official visits/interactions and summits. The scale of participation by business leaders in official delegations has increased and become de rigueur for all major official visits. However, it is not at all clear if this greater involvement has also converted into higher influence of the private sector on foreign economic and commercial policy. All business and industry chambers suffer from a pervasive weakness in research and analytical capabilities. Consequently, their role has been restricted to providing the forum for business-to-business interactions on the sidelines of bilateral (or regional) heads of state summits in conjunction with visits of important ministers. Less charitably, it could be said that the private sector and its representative organizations have been reduced to the role of event managers and cheer-leaders for official initiatives (Baru 2013).

Perhaps the best that can be said about the private sector's influence on India's foreign economic and commercial policy is that the private sector has taken care to ensure that its own stance on almost the entire range of external sector issues has been in sync with the official position. With this convergence in place, the private sector has provided a supportive and facilitating role and allowed Indian negotiators and diplomats to consistently punch above their weight in bilateral, regional, and multilateral negotiations. This has quite clearly been a case of cross-reciprocity where the private sector's support of the official position has been 'rewarded' by greater official patronage and favours to well-established business leaders. But it can be confidently asserted that this has not resulted in actual foreign policy shifts in line with the private sector's suggestions or recommendations.[12] Nor has such support by the private sector to government initiatives resulted in any significant advantages to the private enterprise in general.

However, in the case of the software industry the private sector has worked more closely with the government in evolving negotiating positions and this is reflected in the government taking up the cudgels on behalf of the entire software industry against protective measures adopted by Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries and in the adoption of more aggressive and 'demanding' positions in multilateral and plurilateral service sector negotiations.

Conclusion

From the above discussion, it can perhaps be safely concluded that with the exception of the software, cyber, and ITES sector, the private sector has been largely un-influential in the formulation of India's foreign economic and commercial policies. Its role in security-related or political aspects of foreign policy has been ruled out *ab initio*. Despite

the greater presence of Indian MNCs in other countries in the past ten years, this has not yet translated into business influence on India's geostrategic or political positions. Flag has followed trade to the extent that India may have strengthened its relations and presence in countries where the private sector has found a conducive economic environment. However, it is not clear that India's foreign 'political/security' policy towards any major trading or investment partner has been influenced by business houses or leaders active in these countries.[13] The case of South Asian neighbours with which India has a sizeable trade surplus and which offer lucrative investment opportunities for Indian businesses, is instructive in this regard. India has adopted an asymmetric and non-reciprocal policy towards its neighbours only as recently as 2007. And even now its security agency dominated foreign policy stance towards its neighbours remains at divergence with its ostensible economic and commercial and one might add geostrategic interests.

Three other factors explain this apparent inability of the Indian private sector to exercise any significant (overt) influence on India's foreign economic and commercial policy. First, there is the persistence of a protectionist and mercantilist tendency in large parts of the Indian private sector. Since the days of the 'Second Bombay Club' of the mid-1980s, the private sector has nearly always adopted a mercantilist and/or protectionist stance towards India's engagement with the global economy and its bilateral partners. This was consistent with the official inward-looking and import substituting policy stance until the end of the 1980s. With the onset of liberalization in the mid-1980s and its further acceleration in the 1990s, the protectionist stance of the Indian private sector has been inconsistent with the government's own policy thrust for greater openness and integration with world market and global investment, and financial and technology flows.[14] This protectionist and non-competitive stance of the Indian private sector left it out of step with the emerging trends for greater economic liberalization. However, this seems to have been in line with some aspects of official policy, for example vis-à-vis agriculture and trade-related investment measures (TRIMs) negotiations in the WTO or protection against more liberal import policies for automobiles, and wines from the EU. In these cases, the private sector could at best be said to have achieved a convergence with the official policy stance and then served as a facilitator for the official position and allowing it greater negotiating leverage.

The principal reason for the persistence of this protectionist tendency is surely the Indian industry's inability to become globally competitive, which is reflected in the share of India's merchandise exports stagnating at around 1.3 per cent of global trade volume.[15] The software industry, which grew without protection primarily in the post-1991 period, has seen its share in global ITES trade increase over the years and this is reflected in its non-protectionist and aggressive stance towards the government's commercial policy.

Second, India's private corporate sector is a highly divided and fragmented entity with hardly ever a unified view on any major economic issues faced by the country.[16] The presence of apex or national chambers of commerce and industry does not address this weakness as these apex chambers do not take a unified position on most occasions. There is also no effort on the part of the private sector to articulate a common position

on a public platform on any major foreign policy issue. Consequently, the government is able to achieve a maximum degree of autonomy in its foreign (and indeed domestic) policy actions. This autonomy is further reinforced by the effective co-option of the major chambers of commerce and industry by the government through a process of project-specific fiscal grants that have become increasingly important for the financial health of these industry bodies. Moreover, the large number of industry-specific and regional associations lobby for narrow sectional interests that are often picked up by the concerned officials who pursue them despite opposition from academics, policy advisers, and on some occasions even the national chambers.[17]

Third, Indian business, even the largest conglomerates, remains heavily dependent on the government and public sector monopolies for successful investment ventures and unfettered access to necessary inputs like electricity, coal, transport, etc. As a result, the private sector is hardly in a position to take a contrary position to that adopted by the government. This often results in a contradiction between the publicly adopted position of an industry leader to that attributed to him/her in private interaction with the government.

The relative weakness of the private sector vis-à-vis the government is also exacerbated by the apparent inability of the private sector to adopt higher norms of self-regulation that could give it the material and ethical basis for holding the government accountable. Sharpening the focus on government accountability is the necessary condition for overcoming the debilitating twin deficits of weak governance and poor infrastructure on the global competitiveness of Indian private sector enterprises, which makes it both relatively protectionist and dependent on government handouts and concessions. Eliminating these deficits will allow the private sector to become globally competitive, far more engaged in global markets, and more willing to accept a greater openness of the Indian economy and its integration with global investment, financial and investment flows. Its influence on India's foreign policy will increase correspondingly. Though such a change is in its nascent stage today, the direction is clear and irreversible.

Notes

1. This is perhaps best reflected in the virtual demise of the Swatantra Party, which was (and is to this day) perhaps the only political formation that openly espoused the cause of the private sector and a liberal and open economic order.
2. The search for broader representation and thereby greater influence on policy prompted the CII to break ranks and tradition in opening its membership to public sector enterprises and even elect their CEOs as the CII's office bearers on a few though very limited occasions.
3. This argument is cogently made by Manjari Chatterjee Miller (2013).
4. FICCI, largely representing the more traditional industries and business houses continued with its opposition to the liberalization measures, thereby losing ground to the CII in its ability to both represent Indian business and influence government policies.
5. The delegation was organized by the CII at that time still known as the Association of Indian Engineering Industries (AIEI). The Association led by its Director General Tarun

Das had developed an influential position as it was quick to support Rajiv Gandhi's reform measures much ahead of FICCI (Das 2012).

6. The agreement covered only the product patents and not the process patents which were crucial to the continued production of generic drugs, which were vital for the private sector's efforts to expand India's exports of drugs and pharmaceuticals. The Indian private sector drew acclaim from governments and private sector producers in other emerging and developing economies for protecting generics.
7. The teams included senior former diplomats like Naresh Chandra, K. S. Bajpai, business leaders like Gautam Thapar, Rahul Bajaj, Jamshyd Godrej, and media representatives like T. N. Ninan and Sanjaya Baru, etc.
8. CII's Green Business Centre in Hyderabd, ITC's Sustainable Environment Centre in Delhi, FICCI's task force on climate change and environment, the Indo-UK CEO's Forum on Climate Change, and the IL&FS's green initiatives have been in the front line in the development and adoption of low-carbon technologies. They have also taken a leading role in advocacy for influencing public opinion and practice.
9. Although not an example of private sector influence on India's foreign policy, the case of Press Note 18, issued by the Vajpayee government on 14 December 1998, is an unambiguous example of government commercial (FDI) policy being influenced by the private sector. Press Note 18 required all foreign investors seeking to either set up an independent capacity or enter into a joint venture with a new partner to virtually first acquire a 'no-objection' clearance from the existing joint venture partner. This effectively prevented the foreign investors from expanding their operations in India and gave a significant negotiating advantage to the domestic enterprise vis-à-vis their foreign partners. Press Note 18 was finally replaced by Press Note 1 which made the conditions far less onerous for the foreign partner.
10. Apparently, Amit Mitra, the Secretary General of FICCI, successfully impressed upon the government (Department of Commerce) that the organization of these dialogues should be 'equally distributed' across different national chambers. Consequently, a structured system of assigning the role of principal organizer came into being where chambers took turns to lead the Track II dialogue process, with the government effectively calling all the shots in determining the nature, format, participation, and content of the dialogue.
11. The government effectively deferred to the private sector view of not pushing forward with the UN-led governance of the internet regime, as proposed by Iran and China and also in an official position paper and continuing with Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) as the global regulatory body for the internet. This could change in the future and the position of the private sector could also change in this dynamic area.
12. The private sector's influence on government foreign policy, which may have resulted in real shifts, is perhaps exercised through more subtle and behind-the-door interaction between industry leaders and senior government officials or political leaders. If so, examples are not found in the public domain and therefore not amenable to any critical review. Moreover, it is not clear if these behind-the-door interactions result in private gains or in policy shifts that affect large parts of the industry.
13. The most striking example of this divergence between the presence of Indian economic and commercial interests and India's political and geostrategic policy stance is the continued insistence in India's foreign policy to maintain strategic 'equi-distance' from China and the United States. This is despite the fact that the United States has been and will remain the largest potential market for India's non-primary exports, the source of front-line

technologies, and the largest potential (non-threatening) source of FDI into India (Kumar 2010). It is not entirely relevant here to cite the case of China being India's largest trading partner because of the nature of this trade which is heavily imbalanced against India and whose composition makes India look like a 'Southern' exporter to a 'Northern' trading partner.

14. The best examples of this are the private sector's opposition to the liberalization of the patent regime in the pharmaceutical sector, the promulgation of Press Note 18, and the opposition to the entry of foreign investors in the multi-brand retail sector.
15. Also reflected rather dramatically in Bangladesh exporting larger volumes of ready-made garments than India and primary exports constituting nearly 80 per cent of India's exports to China which has an export surplus of nearly 40 per cent in its bilateral trade with India. The lack of competitiveness of the Indian manufacturing sector is a result of many interrelated challenges, of which the most prominent are the twin deficits of governance and infrastructure. These impose high costs on the Indian manufacturing sector, rendering it globally uncompetitive.
16. The only exception, that perhaps proves the rule, was the case of a unified opposition from all segments of the Indian private sector to the government's attempt at starting the negotiations on a bilateral free trade agreements (FTA) with China. And even in this case, the private sector's stance coincided with the government's own position and therefore did not present any difficulty in its implementation.
17. The case of the Kerala-based chambers of commerce and industry successful opposing the import of black pepper from Sri Lanka and its later inclusion is an example of sector associations prevailing over the national chambers. Similarly, all the sector associations in the apparel and ready-made garments industry had successfully lobbied against the concessional treatment to imports from Bangladesh and Sri Lanka despite the contrary stance of the national chambers. This fragmentation of the private sector will perhaps only increase in the coming period with the rise of regional business houses.

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CHAPTER 19

THE MEDIA IN THE MAKING OF INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY

MANOJ JOSHI

THE media have a direct and fundamental effect on almost every aspect of the lives of the people. This is especially so for the entire spectrum of the political process. It is through media that society and the individuals acquire knowledge, interpret it, and use it to make sense of their political environment. Though mass media are available in all societies, they work differently in democratic societies like India and authoritarian ones like China. In one case, competing media offer choices to the consumer, even though those choices are filtered through the biases of media owners, editors, and reporters. In the other, the goal of the media is to provide information that is deemed politically acceptable and correct and, self-consciously, the choice is made by a political elite.

There is a vital difference in the way media work relative to domestic and foreign policies. When it comes to domestic politics, media are just one of the resources that assist us in understanding our choices and exercising them. We also have direct knowledge from personal or observed experience. A recent study indicates that media exposure itself influences voter choices in favor of a particular party (Verma and Sardesai 2014). The importance of garnering domestic support for foreign policy is recognized and underscored, for example, by the fact that a great deal of the work of the External Publicity Division of India's Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) is in handling domestic media (Baru 2009: 11). And among the tasks of the new Public Diplomacy Division is to build foreign policy consensus within the country.

We often depend to a greater degree on the media to report and explain foreign policy developments. For this reason, media practitioners and policy-makers necessarily have a close relationship which is, of course, a two-way street. At one level, the government exercises a certain degree of pressure on the media professional in terms of providing or denying access; on the other hand, the reporters and correspondents, through their reportage and commentary, are able to nudge policy in certain directions. Thus, the

media play a direct and significant role in the making of foreign policy. Just how much of a role is the subject of this chapter.

There are, of course, differences in the role played by the various media. In the case of TV, the audience ranges from the illiterate to the highly educated, while in the case of the print media, it is usually the educated who buy newspapers. TV in that sense has a 'mass' audience, presumably less critical, but more prone to elicit emotional responses because of its direct and visual reportage.

All this has been true ever since modern media, in the form of newspapers, emerged in Europe. The foreign correspondent, who often doubled as a war correspondent in colonial times, was a key element in manufacturing consent for the policies of the colonial power. But in certain instances they also had an effect in mitigating the worst aspects of colonial rule. The best example of this was reportage of William Howard Russell who worked for *The Times* of London in the middle of the nineteenth century. His reports on the Crimean War created consternation in Britain and led to his government's fall. They also led to private ameliorative efforts led by people like Florence Nightingale whose work helped to prevent even greater losses to the British forces from disease and wounds. In the case of the Great Mutiny of 1857, also known as India's First War of Independence, Russell's reportage, which criticized the overbearing British attitude towards the 'natives', played some role in checking indiscriminate British killing of captured rebels.

Russell's experiences suggest that the media can draw and sustain attention to a policy issue, and, secondly, alter the discourse around a policy by framing or defining the issue in a particular way. There are two prominent theories on media and policy-making—agenda setting and issue framing. However, the practical experience of the media's role in policy-making need not necessarily be positive (Soroka et al. 2013). It can aid and abet, or hinder, a particular policy course by focusing on individuals involved in the making of policy. It can also be an invaluable means of communicating policy views of the government to the public and providing feedback to the government from the public. However, in practical terms, governments sure of their course are able to sit out media campaigns.

The emergence of new technologies, particularly in relation to TV, has changed the face of the media since the 1980s. Major events like the overthrow of the Ceausescu regime in Romania, the fall of the Berlin Wall, the deaths at Tiananmen Square, and the Gulf Wars of 1999 and 2003, were conveyed to the world through real-time TV and had a significant political impact across the globe. The American intervention in Somalia and NATO's in the former Yugoslavia soon raised the question as to the extent of the influence of media on government policies. Clearly, 'the new technologies appeared to reduce the scope for calm deliberation over policy, forcing policy makers to respond to whatever issue journalists focused on' (Robinson: 1999: 301).

This so-called CNN effect countered the belief that the principal role of the media was, in the words of Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman, to 'manufacture consent' on foreign policy. They argued that political and media elites essentially construct propaganda narratives to build support for US foreign policy (Herman and Chomsky 2002 [1988]).

However, researchers like Robinson have argued that the framing of news media reports is crucial in determining their political impact. Indeed, looking at various theories, Robinson has suggested that media influence government policy 'only when there exists policy that is uncertain and media coverage [that] is framed to advocate a particular course of action' (Robinson 1999: 308).

The Indian Media Profile

Indian media activities can be divided historically into two periods. The first extended between 1947 and 1991 or so, when the government exercised a monopoly of radio and television broadcasting but when the print media was free of government control. Even so, the government was able to influence it through providing—or withholding—advertising as well as through licensing procedures for importing newsprint. Government media policies, which tended to be restrictive, played a role in influencing media comment on foreign policy.

After 1991, with the first Gulf War playing the catalyst, cable news broadcasting transformed TV news. Using loopholes in existing laws, it established itself across the country in middle-class households. This coincided with the period in which the Indian economy was liberalized. In the late 1990s, the internet took hold. Newsprint import was freed of government licensing. Major newspapers and, especially, largely private cable news broadcasting expanded on the proceeds of non-governmental sources for advertising and subsequently also sought and derived funding from the market.

The key watershed was the Kargil conflict of 1999 when private cable news journalists were able to bypass government controls and report directly from the battle zone. The broadcasts triggered an emotional wave of nationalism and the government soon found it convenient to ride it, rather than to take a narrow bureaucratic stand on preventing journalists from directly interacting with military personnel or operating in the war zone. This began the process of empowering the media, which meant that it became difficult for the authorities to block the media from any news development. This approach culminated in the fiasco of the media coverage of the November 26, 2008, terror attack in Mumbai when uncontrolled and near real-time media coverage actually aided the terrorists' actions.

The Indian media comprise four elements—print, radio, TV, internet and mobile telephones. The mobile phone is not an independent medium of journalism, but a medium through which journalistic output is purveyed.

Current affairs programming over the radio remains a government monopoly. The other media are overwhelmingly private sector ones, even though the government still runs the largest terrestrial TV network, Doordarshan.

Nearly 600 daily newspapers compete for a circulation of some 50 million copies in total. But these may range from two-page rags to quality papers like *The Times of India* and *The Hindu* which could span anywhere between 32 and 48 pages. In the last two decades, as education has expanded across the country, so have newspapers published in

Indian languages. Going by readership, the top paper with 15.5 million readers is *Dainik Jagran* whose readership is twice that of the *Times of India* which is seventh in this listing. The top three newspapers are published in Hindi, the fourth in Malayalam and the fifth in Tamil. While English-language newspapers have traditionally attracted higher advertising revenues and wielded greater influence, Indian-language newspapers are now catching up.[1]

As part of liberalization and as a consequence of satellite TV broadcasts, the Government of India surrendered its monopoly of TV current affairs programming in the early 1990s. Over 800-plus private TV satellite channels exist in India currently, including foreign ones, catering for virtually everything—news, sports, entertainment, the Indian version of televangelism, films, and soap operas. In addition, the government runs 30 channels catering to news, entertainment, and sports.

Among the important channels are the six 24-hour news channels that broadcast in English, 18 or so in Hindi, and over 100 in other Indian languages. Foreign broadcasters like CNN or BBC are part of cable and digital bouquets. India has over 153 million homes with television sets, of which nearly 145 million have access to cable and satellite broadcast delivery. This translates into audiences that could be up to 800 million if not more. It is a feature of urban India, at least, that shanty-town houses may not have a toilet, but will have a TV set.[2]

The government plays a disproportionately large role in Indian society and this is reflected in the news that is carried by newspapers and TV channels. In the last ten years this has been declining as 'news' has taken on a larger meaning with most papers expanding the definition of news to social events, book launches, and entertainment programs, giving coinage to a new term for India—'infotainment'.

Over time, the ownership pattern of the Indian media industry appears to be changing. It earlier featured established families like the family of Kasturi Ranga Iyengar who own *The Hindu*, the Guptas (*Dainik Jagran*), the Jains (*Times of India* and *Times Now*), Shobhana Bhartia of the Birla family (*Hindustan Times*), and entrepreneurs like Aroon Purie of Living Media (*India Today, Aaj Tak*), Prannoy and Radhika Roy (NDTV), and Raghav Bahl (Network 18). Now, big business houses like Reliance and Aditya Vikram Birla Group are moving in to take control or significant stakes in Network 18 and Living Media. There has been little or no research done on the influence of corporate groups on media positions on specific issues in India. It is not clear yet whether the acquisitions are purely business decisions aimed at convergence technologies, or at influencing public opinion and policy.

As business people in an environment dominated by the government, newspaper owners have traditionally walked a fine line: they needed to show their independence to attract readers, but, on the other hand, they had to ensure that the heavy hand of the government did not fall on their larger non-media business interests.

The government also developed a direct relationship with media personnel through the agency of appointing wage boards to set the emoluments of 'working journalists'. Yet another means of influence, particularly in the states and the

national capital, was by providing housing to journalists from the government housing pool.

Media and Understanding Foreign Countries

Media impact on foreign policy might begin with the larger role that media plays in providing an understanding of foreign countries and their foreign policies to the domestic audience. The image of a country or region, created through media reportage and commentary, cannot but be a component of the foreign policy formulation of a country.

However, most of the Indian media depend on foreign sources for their regular source of news. *The Hindu* had correspondents and stringers in Beijing, Jakarta, Islamabad, Manama, Paris, Washington, DC, London, and Addis Ababa but has now retrenched many of them. Even much larger and more profitable newspapers like *The Times of India* currently field full-time staffers only in Washington, DC and Beijing. The same is true of India's TV news channels, which do not have full-time staffers abroad and rely on buying foreign footage and the use of stringers.

Thus, the Indian media continue to view developments abroad through the eyes of foreign news agencies since Indian news agencies, too, have just a handful of correspondents abroad. The Press Trust of India, the largest news agency, has correspondents only in Colombo, New York, London, Washington, DC, and Islamabad.

Indian Foreign Policy Today

The central goal of India's foreign policy has been to protect the sovereignty of India and create an environment which will aid in eliminating poverty and deprivation in this vast country. In practice, the record of Indian foreign policy has been mixed because India's success in achieving both these aims has been spotty. India has not been able to emerge as a significant international actor. Indeed, given its size, it has not been able to achieve the heft that it should have even in its own region. This is compounded by the fact that India does not feature the attributes that often enable a country to exert influence abroad—it is not a great trading nation, nor does it possess a globally scarce and valuable commodity like oil, and its founding ideology of peace and conciliation has not had an impact comparable to that exerted by Chinese communism, or Pakistan's Islamism.

India's weakness is as much a consequence of external circumstances—such as the emergence of a hostile Pakistan as its neighbor to the west, and China as its northern one—as of its internal inability to shape a foreign policy based on a ruthless pursuit of

its geopolitical interests. Indian policy retained a Nehruvian patina, even though there was rapid change in its strategic environment in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. In these 30-odd years, the alliance between China and Pakistan matured, there was détente between the Soviet Union and the United States, and the United States and China, and then the Soviet Union collapsed. Regional interventions, be they in the erstwhile East Pakistan in 1971 or Sri Lanka and Maldives in 1987, had mixed consequences. Even steps to enhance military capacity, such as the nuclear test of 1974, were ambiguous and tentative. Over the decades, the consensual and elite nature of India's foreign policy has given way to diversity. This has been a result of multiple factors. On one hand, the Congress Party that dominated the country's polity until the mid-1980s has given way to newer political forces and elites. Simultaneously, the spread of education has led to a major expansion of Hindi and other regional language newspapers across the country. Third, technology in the form of TV has made news directly accessible even to the uneducated. All this has transformed the world in which foreign policy was made by a tiny, mainly bureaucratic elite in New Delhi and transmitted to the country by an equally minuscule English-language print media.

Media and the Fraying Consensus

The largely consensual style of foreign policy has been replaced by approaches that vary from being simply different, to being partisan and ideological. The most vivid instance of breakdown in the domestic political consensus on foreign policy was the Indo-US nuclear deal of 2008, examined in the next subsection. But change is evident in the different approaches towards Pakistan and China as well.

With the end of the era of consensual foreign policy, the media end up playing the role of an arbiter, rather than a reporter, of contending political views. The dividing line between arbitrating contending views and advocating a particular point of view is quite thin. Meanwhile, the media as a whole has emerged as a significant business opportunity attracting large investments and most of its advertising revenues from the private sector. This has limited the government's ability to influence the media using its traditional methodologies of patronage.

On one hand, strides in literacy have led to a dramatic expansion of newspapers, especially those publishing in Indian languages. On the other, there has been an explosive expansion of TV which cuts across all classes and literacy levels. Both of these developments have led to huge business opportunities and profits for the private sector. This has helped the media to become more autonomous players in the foreign policy debates in the country, often adopting contrarian positions with the goal of attracting audiences.

TV news channels may not often set the agenda, but they have certainly adopted new styles of framing issues. For examples, newscasts offer less news content and more binary, for-and-against debates, tightly controlled by star anchors. However, their record of actually influencing policy has been indifferent.

So while there can be little doubt that the media play a significant role in informing, shaping, or skewing the foreign policy debate, it remains questionable as to whether the media can actually lead a government to adopt, modify, or abandon, a chosen foreign policy course.

We will look at four issues relating to the impact of the media and foreign policy, all of them clustered around 2008–9. They produced varying outcomes in the same political space.

In two of the cases we look at, the ruling United Progressive Alliance (UPA) coalition fractured and, in one case, that of the Indo-US nuclear deal, part of it backed the opposition in an effort to topple the government. In the other case, in responding to the Sri Lankan military offensive against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), Tamil Nadu-based parties, including coalition partner Dravida Munnetra Kazgham (DMK), attacked the government. The state-level media went along with the Tamil Nadu parties, though not that of the country as a whole. In the third case—that of the fallout from the India–Pakistan joint statement after the Sharm el-Sheikh summit in July 2009—the battle lines saw the government on one side and virtually the entire media and opposition against it.

In the fourth (still running) issue, the media have, to date, maintained a steady drumfire of criticism of the government over the Chinese transgressions across the Line of Actual Control (LAC) that marks the border between the two countries. The opposition has not been particularly active on this issue.

The Indo-US Nuclear Deal

The left, centered mostly on the Communist Party of India, which with its 59 seats enabled the Congress-led UPA—which won just 218—to form the national government after the 2004 general elections, understood well that the Indo-US nuclear deal was not just about civil nuclear trade, but represented a fundamental shift in India's foreign policy orientation, especially since the measure was paralleled by moves to strengthen the US–India defense relationship as well.

The left confronted the government when India voted with the United States in the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) with reference to Iran's nuclear program in September 2005 and February 2006. The left also protested the growing military ties between the two countries, and mounted a protest when India and the United States held a joint exercise at the Kalaikunda airbase in West Bengal, the left's stronghold. But the breaking point in the slow-motion divorce came in August 2008 when Prime Minister Manmohan Singh announced that India would approach the IAEA to sign a new safeguards agreement to implement the Indian end of the Indo-US nuclear deal. On July 8, 2008, the left parties withdrew support from the UPA leading to a confidence vote in Parliament on July 22, which the government won after strenuous maneuvering.

Though the discussions for the Indo-US nuclear deal, and, indeed, the Indo-US entente had been initiated by the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government, the Bharatiya

Janata Party (BJP) took an opportunistic stance and opposed the nuclear deal. And, in August, it supported a no-confidence motion against the government. However the government was able to defeat the motion and to continue on until the end of its term in 2009.

What was significant all through the developments was the media's consistent support of the government, despite somewhat murky goings-on during the voting on the no-confidence motion.[3] A curious episode saw *The Hindu*, which was one of the strongest proponents of the deal, change its views the moment the left fell out with the government.

India and the Sri Lankan Civil War

Since the ignominious return of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) from the island in 1990, India had stayed away from direct involvement in the Sri Lankan civil war between the LTTE and the Sri Lankan government. However, the Indian government quietly backed the Sri Lankan government in the mid-2000s in a bid to counter Pakistani and Chinese influence.

In January 2008, the Sri Lankan government unilaterally withdrew from the ceasefire agreement it had signed with the LTTE in February 2002 and resumed its offensive against the rebels. After a year and a half of hard slogging, and through orthodox military tactics using heavy firepower with little regard to civilian casualties, the Sri Lankan army boxed the LTTE into a small area near the Nanthikadal lagoon and, on May 16, 2009, President Mahinda Rajpakse declared victory against the LTTE. Two days later V. Prabhakaran, the leader of the LTTE, was killed.

Throughout, the LTTE's fight evoked a great deal of sympathy and stirred protests in the Western world. But in India, the only support they got was from Tamil Nadu. Political parties there, especially the DMK, a member of the UPA coalition, and the state media, strongly criticized the Sri Lankan government for what they said were egregious human rights violations. Significantly, the last stage of the Sri Lankan campaign took place against the backdrop of general elections in India in which the DMK was part of the UPA. Yet, despite a lot of fire and brimstone in the Tamil Nadu media, and theatrics by Tamil politicians, there was little change in Indian policy.[4]

Not surprisingly, the media in Tamil Nadu made their sentiments in favor of the Sri Lankan Tamils clear. But, because of the past history with India, especially the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi in 1991 by an LTTE suicide bomber, there was no direct support for the LTTE, which was, in any case a banned organization in India. However, support was extended through attacks on Sri Lanka for its human rights record, and for demands that the Sri Lankan army cease fire.

India–Pakistan Relations and Balochistan

The Sharm el-Sheikh summit that took place on July 16–17, 2009, was the first after the Mumbai attack of November 2008, as well as the first after Manmohan Singh's victory in

the May 2009 general elections. Prime Minister Singh clearly saw this as an opportunity to pursue a project close to his heart: India–Pakistan rapprochement.

However, it is not clear what persuaded the government to accept a clause in the Indo-Pakistani Joint Statement, following the Sharm el-Sheikh summit between Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and his Pakistani counterpart Yousaf Raza Gilani, that Pakistan 'has some information on threats in Balochistan and other areas'.

This was an entirely new formulation, seemingly giving credence, without any specific evidence, to alleged Indian activity in stoking militancy in Balochistan. Perhaps it was done to balance the reference to the Mumbai attack and the need to bring its perpetrators to justice.

This triggered off a storm of criticism in India with media articles describing this variously as a 'betrayal', 'sellout', and 'blunder'. Not surprisingly, the main opposition party, the BJP also sharply criticized it.[5]

As on other issues, the storm in TV coverage was several degrees worse than what transpired in the print media. The results were predictable. All talk of rapprochement with Pakistan ground to a halt and Prime Minister Singh was not able to kick-start the dialogue throughout his term thereafter.

Sino-Indian Border Issue

The entire length of the 4,056 km Sino-Indian border is disputed by China and exists today as a notional Line of Actual Control. This line is not marked on the ground, and the two countries do not share a common perception of where the line runs. There are several places where India and China have differing interpretations on where even this notional line runs. Both sides patrol up to the limit of their respective interpretation. India describe Chinese efforts to patrol up to their interpretation of the line as 'transgressions'. The media, however, freely use the more dramatic 'incursions'.

Another feature of the LAC management is that India and China have signed various confidence-building measures to maintain peace and tranquillity on the LAC. As part of this, they have developed standard operating procedures that kick in if patrols come face to face. This involves, first, showing of banners calling on the other side to withdraw and escalating to a demand for meetings between higher level commanders. These are fairly routine, yet when described in the media as 'face offs' they assume a different, more threatening dimension. Indian officials say that there has never really been any kind of a violent incident on the LAC since the mid-1970s.

In 2007–8, relations between India and China nose-dived over Tibetan protests against the Olympic Games in Beijing, and also perhaps because of India's closeness to Washington, as exemplified by the Indo-US nuclear deal. The result was that border talks between the two slowed down and thereafter, in 2009, a spate of articles appeared in the Indian media charging China with violating the LAC between the two countries, often attributing this view to 'official sources'. The reports in the print medium were tame compared to those on TV. Led by Times Now, the coverage went hammer and tongs at

China. They attacked the government's clarifications and built up a climate of hysteria (Pandalai 2013: 54–7).

However, the Indian official response was uniformly moderate. In response to a question in Parliament, the Minister of External Affairs, S. M. Krishna, spelt out the official position: 'China disputes the International Boundary between India and China. There is no commonly delineated Line of Actual Control [LAC] between the two countries. From time to time, on account of differences in perception of the LAC, situations have arisen on the ground that could have been avoided if we had a common perception of the LAC.'[6]

India's National Security Advisor, M. K. Narayanan, who chaired the top-level China Study Group, also weighed in on the issue in September 2009 when he noted: 'I really am unable to explain why there is being so much media hype on this question.' Speaking on Karan Thapar's *Devil's Advocate* program on CNN-IBN, he pointed out: 'In terms of number of incursions, there has been hardly any increase. Occasionally inroads are a little deeper than what it might have been in the past. I don't think there is anything alarming about it. I think we have a good understanding about the whole issue.' He went on to add that the media hype could well have serious consequences on the border: 'That's what we are trying to avoid. But there is always concern [that] if this thing [media hype] goes on like this someone somewhere might lose his cool and something might go wrong.'[7]

India's respected strategic analyst B. Raman examined the issue in his blog, Raman's Strategic Analysis, and decried what he said was 'hysteria that is being created by some of our strategic analysts and the media over the trans-border developments.'[8]

But, despite this 'hysteria', the basic official stance of the government of India did not change and it continued to observe all the confidence-building measures it had agreed to with China, as well as to engage Beijing in a high-level dialogue to resolve the border dispute.

Conclusion

It is clear that in the case of India, the influence of the media over foreign policy is limited by a variety of factors. One of these is the issue of access to information, which is a given when issues relate to foreign policy. Governments tend to maintain a high level of secrecy when it comes to relations with other countries, especially when difficult issues are involved.

The second is the issue of quality of reportage. In the four instances examined, the quality of reporting on the nuclear deal was high and access existed to subject specialists since there was quite visible opposition to the deal from within the nuclear establishment. However, in the latter portion of the discussions around the deal, political partisanship emerged visibly, but more by way of emphasis and editorial comment, rather than on the subject matter of the negotiations. Essentially the government was happy

with the support it got, but when a prominent media supporter, *The Hindu*, switched sides, the government's position remain unchanged.

On the Sino-Indian border issue, notwithstanding government clarifications, the media persisted in reporting the issue framed by itself as centered on Chinese 'incursions', ignoring the realities of the nature of the LAC. This suggests an effort at deliberate provocation, though probably aimed more at gaining readership or viewership than anything more sinister. However, it was dangerous brinkmanship, and clearly indicated a lack of editorial control. Here, too, government policy remained unaffected. Nevertheless, it is clear that in the period examined, principally 2007–9, ties cooled—the two countries did not sign any new agreements and high-level contacts were reduced.

In the case of the third issue, relating to Sri Lanka, it would appear that a lot of the criticism of the government by the Tamil Nadu parties and the media was shadow boxing and deeply cynical. There was acceptance of the fact that there was no question of a repeat Indian military intervention, and, short of one, the government in New Delhi could not alter the course of Sri Lankan government policy, even if it had wanted to do so. The rhetoric was heightened, too, by the fact that it took place during the run-up to a general election.

As far as the India–Pakistan issue is concerned, it seems to back Robinson's assertion that 'when there exists policy that is uncertain and media coverage [that] is framed to advocate a particular course of action' (Robinson 1999: 308), then media influence can be telling. There is no doubt that in the case of the Indo-US nuclear deal, the China border issue, and the Sri Lankan policy, government had a clear-headed policy in place. But in the case of Pakistan, there was uncertainty of policy within the government. Possibly the only advocate of the policy of rapprochement was Prime Minister Singh himself. But by accepting an ambiguous reference to Balochistan, he gave the media a handle to trigger a storm of criticism which undermined his Pakistan policy fatally.

Pandalai's study of the Indian media, too, underscores Robinson's conclusion. She says that her findings reveal that 'the Indian media affected foreign policy formulation in a minimalistic and often symbolic manner'. She adds that the perception that the media lack maturity has detracted from their ability to influence long-term policy changes (Pandalai 2013: 67).

Thus, the extent to which the media influence government policy depends to a great degree on the government itself. A strong government with a coherent policy can tide over media storms, whereas an unsure course within the government can buffet the policy ship in one direction or the other, or bring it to a grinding halt. All of this is notwithstanding problems within the media themselves—lack of expertise in reporting on specialized issues, poor editorial supervision, or even a cynical strategy of deliberately fanning emotions as a means of maintaining viewership and enhancing circulation.

The media in a democratic country do play the role of an autonomous fourth estate of the government. This is a more complex function of what newspapers and news mean to the average citizen. But no doubt, its quality depends both on the media institutions, as well as the consuming public. In both these areas there are large variations in India. Media quality in India varies from good, to bad, to indifferent. More so than in other

democratic polities, the consumers of media products range from illiterates, to literates but uneducated, and the educated. All this ensures that the Indian media still have a long way to go before they can play a significant role in the making of foreign policy.

Notes

1. The figures are from the Indian Readership Survey 2013, accessed through <http://www.slideshare.net/darshan_h_sheth/irs-2013-toplinefindings-30630677>.
2. The figures are from the 2014 update provided by TAM, the organization which monitors Indian TV viewership, accessed through <http://www.tamindia.com:8080/ref_pdf/Overview_Universe_Update-2014.pdf>.
3. 'A Sound and Honourable 123', *The Hindu*, August 6, 2007; 'India, US seal 123 Agreement', *The Times of India*, October 11, 2008.
4. Sunil Raman, '"Sri Lanka factor" in Tamil Nadu poll', <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/8043588.stm>.
5. Bharat Bhushan, 'Manmohan Singh's Balochistan Blunder', *Mail Today*, July 20, 2009; G. Parthasarthy, 'Sell-out at Sharm-el-Sheikh', <http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/todays-paper/tp-opinion/sellout-at-sharmelsheikh/article1057457.ece>.
6. External Affairs Minister S. M. Krishna's response to Question No. 3141 asked by Mr. Lalit Kishore Chaturvedi MP on December 17, 2009, in the Rajya Sabha. <http://164.100.47.4/newrsquestion/ShowQn.aspx>.
7. 'Media Hype Could Create Problems with China; NSA', *The Hindu* citing a PTI report on September 19, 2009. <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/media-hype-could-create-problems-with-china-nsa/article22358.ece>.
8. 'China's Strategic Intrusions in India's Neighbourhood', Raman's Strategic Analysis, September 14, 2009. <http://ramanstrategicanalysis.blogspot.in/2009/09/chinas-strategic-intrusions-in-indias.html>.

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CHAPTER 20

THINK-TANKS AND UNIVERSITIES

AMITABH MATTOO AND RORY MEDCALF

This chapter provides an overview of the relationship between India's universities and think-tanks and the nation's foreign policy. In the process it identifies the range and nature of India's universities and think-tanks, traces the history and evolution of some of the more prominent and well-known of these organizations, the actors and individuals associated with them, their contribution to building these institutions, and—most importantly—their influence on foreign policy. Although India's universities and think-tanks have helped shape policy at some pivotal moments in the history of independent India, on most occasions they have proved less influential than might have been expected. The institutions mentioned here do not constitute an exhaustive list, but are illustrative of their contributions in shaping India's external policies.

This chapter is divided into three broad sections. The first looks at the state of universities in India and their contribution to shaping India's foreign policy. The second reviews the role of think-tanks in providing inputs into or influencing the government or public opinion on matters of India's external policy. The third section focuses on individuals seeking to influence policies adopted by the various Indian governments. The final section suggests that exceptional individuals have tended to wield more influence than institutions. Even though in recent times the business community, regional political parties, and diaspora organizations have been vocal in their opinion of India's policies towards its neighbours and its relations with other great powers, for the sake of analytical clarity these organizations are considered elsewhere in this volume.

Our central argument is that the impact of universities and think-tanks in shaping India's foreign policy has been considerably less than it could or should be in a democracy. While the general failure of universities to contribute meaningfully to debates on foreign policy has both historical and institutional causes elaborated on in the later sections, the landscape of think-tanks and other such related non-governmental organizations remains incipient (with some exceptions), offering research outputs often lacking the rigour of many Western counterparts, and failing to garner international

recognition. It is difficult to establish whether this is a cause or a symptom of them not being systematically consulted by the foreign policy and strategic elite of the country—although, again, some outstanding individuals from these institutions have proven exceptions to this rule.

Before taking a closer look at the relationship of universities and think-tanks to Indian foreign policy, we need to emphasize that these institutions do not operate or evolve in a vacuum but are the products of the milieu in which they are set up and the individuals leading them. Their positioning and efficacy are often determined by the relationships they maintain with other related government institutions, particularly in a newly independent country like India where the central government tends to maintain a tight grip on policy, particularly policies dealing with external relations. If there is one overarching reason for the meagre foreign policy impact of India's universities and think-tanks, it has been government's determination, particularly within its powerful bureaucracy, to jealously hold the policy reins. A second cause, however, is not government's fault at all: it is, rather, the extent to which Indian academic thinking on international relations has often distanced itself from the parameters, limitations, and hard realities of foreign policy.

Recurring Strands in Indian Thinking about Foreign Policy and the Institutional Context

Some significant features in early writings on Indian foreign policy that continue to exert influence include: a policy of non-alignment; a desire to follow an apparent 'Indian tradition' of adopting the right means to achieve desired goals; and emphasis on negotiations as a means of bridging differences in matters of war and peace (Appadorai 1969). In addition, a feeling of being the natural leader of the Afro-Asian world without any expansionist tendencies or urge to dominate, and India's adherence to non-interference in the internal affairs of neighbouring states are often reiterated in early accounts of Indian foreign policy (Prasad 1962). Thus the thinking about the external world has revolved around questions of ethics and justice in the international system and a strong belief in multilateralism as the best means of dealing with conflicts around the world.

After independence, the whole enterprise of foreign policy-making became centralized in the hands of the Prime Minister and his inner Cabinet, but not without reason. Jawaharlal Nehru's stature coupled with his knowledge of international affairs and his personal interest in related matters guaranteed him a *carte blanche* when it came to foreign policy. Together with his office (PMO), the Prime Minister closely oversaw External Affairs until his death. Nehru was instrumental in determining the makeup of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) to the extent that he reportedly interviewed (Mehta 2010) potential Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officers and would often make

decisions on the posting of both junior and senior diplomats (Saksena 1996). Under this arrangement, he and his small coterie set the direction of foreign policy. Thus, the Parliament was informed rather than consulted on decisions made, and the MEA remained a bystander rather than making any substantial contribution to strategic thinking or policy-making.

The tradition of keeping the foreign ministry under the control of the Prime Minister (PM) continued after Nehru's death. Since then, nine PMs have served as External Affairs Minister while simultaneously holding the country's most powerful office. Thus in the structure of governance, the PMO remains the dominant body dealing with foreign policy issues, while officials at the MEA—with honourable exceptions—are often restricted to policy implementation. That is, limited to the management rather than the crafting of external relations and the handling of high-level visits and day-to-day problems.

With the establishment of the Policy Planning Review Division (now renamed Policy, Planning, Research Division) in 1966, an organization similar to the influential US State Department's Policy Planning Staff was envisaged. Unlike in the United States, however, this Indian division did not include experts from academia or think-tanks who could provide imaginative and thoughtful policy options because of their knowledge about certain issues or areas. The bureaucrats in the MEA had no incentive to seek outside expertise and with time the division came to be plagued with internal squabbles, personality clashes, and ministerial rivalries (Saksena 1996: 402), ensuring that PMOs could afford to sideline it when making important decisions. More recently, one seasoned observer of Indian foreign policy described the division as 'a decrepit, virtually defunct, part of the MEA, which is tucked away somewhere in the corner where the light of the day rarely penetrates' (Bagchi 2009).

In a research paper by Daniel Markey titled 'Developing India's Foreign Policy "Software"', which received considerable attention in the diplomatic and strategic circles of New Delhi, the author diagnoses the institutional reasons impeding India's rise to great-power status (Markey 2009). He suggests impediments include: a shortage of staff in the IFS; inadequate midcareer training; indifference towards outside expertise; the often pitiable state of poorly funded and highly regulated public universities; and the inability of think-tanks to conduct high-quality policy research due to insufficient access to information or resources. These elements need to be considered in the context of the larger institutional evolution of India's foreign policy-making process and the role that universities play in it.

Role of Universities

Before reviewing some prominent universities and gauging their contribution to Indian foreign policy, it is important to register the impact Nehru had on international relations scholarship in India. Kanti Bajpai argues that such was the effect of Nehru's aura,

expertise, and knowledge about international affairs, that domestic academia remained trapped in a virtual intellectual vacuum sustained by the belief that they could not engage as equals given his understanding of foreign policy, nor offer critiques (Bajpai 2005). Consequently state policy was very rarely objectively analysed and academics would often employ their intellect in rationalizing the official position rather than critically evaluating it.

While in this sense Nehru may be accused of stifling independent scholarship on international relations, he also needs to be acknowledged as an institution builder. Few political leaders in Asia had the same breadth of vision, sense of global history, and deep commitment to building institutions. Under Nehru's patronage, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru founded the Indian Council for World Affairs (ICWA) in 1943. The ICWA played a critical role in setting up the Indian School of International Studies (ISIS) in 1955 as part of the University of Delhi. Nehru's two associates in this endeavour were Hriday Nath Kunzru and A. Appadorai, President and Secretary-General of the ICWA, respectively. Appadorai remained the Director of ISIS throughout its first decade. In 1961, ISIS became a deemed university under Section 3 of the University Grants Commission (UGC) Act, enabling it to award doctoral degrees. In the 1960s Sapru House, which housed the ICWA (and ISIS in its initial years), was regarded as one of the 'best research libraries in Asia' (Rajan 2005).

In 1970, ISIS became part of Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) under a new name, the School of International Studies (SIS).

The same year ISIS was established, the Department of African Studies was inaugurated at the University of Delhi, and a year later, in 1956, Jadavpur University (JU) set up its own Department of International Relations. This produced a quantitative expansion of departments offering courses in International Studies (IS).

Today, IS is taught in about 150 universities in India at the undergraduate and post-graduate levels. At the post-graduate level, about 120 universities offer IS within their Political Science departments. Most also offer courses at the MPhil level. Doctoral theses on IS-related issues have been produced at more than 100 of these departments. In addition, another 30 or so schools/centres and departments focus exclusively on IS. The three best known are: the SIS at JNU, New Delhi; the Department of International Relations at JU, Kolkata; and the Department of Politics and International Studies at Pondicherry University. In the field of area/regional studies, the South Asian Studies Centre at the University of Rajasthan, and the Departments of African Studies and East Asian Studies at the University of Delhi were established more than four decades ago, while for more than half a century departments of defence, security, and strategic studies have existed at Allahabad and Pune universities. Today individual scholars of great excellence and expertise on foreign countries and regions or specific foreign policy issues are to be found all over India, but generally operating solo rather than within a wider department reflecting their own standards.

Disappointingly all this scholarly activity is yet to produce the kind of policy-minded experts or scholar-practitioners that have so enriched foreign policy debates in the United States. What went wrong? Why don't the universities play a critical role in India's

foreign policy decision-making? The reasons universities have failed to play a significant role in analysing, critiquing, and contributing to shaping India's foreign policy are manifold. They are systemic, institutional, and disciplinary. They also relate to questions of leadership.

In June 2007, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, in his address at the 150th Anniversary Function of University of Mumbai, admitted:

> Our university system is, in many parts, in a state of disrepair ... In almost half the districts in the country, higher education enrolments are abysmally low, almost two-third of our universities and 90 per cent of our colleges are rated as below average on quality parameters.[1]

While India's conservative bureaucracy often exerts its privilege to withhold the information and data required for original research on various issues of policy importance, the universities are also at fault for failing to produce international studies researchers capable of contributing to policy-making.

Even though IS is taught in many departments, it is yet to be mainstreamed as an independent discipline. Lack of disciplinary boundaries and absence of training in theory-driven research and methodological tools have deprived the subject of the academic respectability which attracts the best talent and students, most of whom prefer hard sciences, medicine, or commerce. Keeping up with the tradition of not questioning the state's external policies, Indian IS scholars in general are yet to liberate themselves from dependence on the state, and those who do present a different point of view tempt sanction and professional disadvantage (Mattoo 2009).

In the 1970s and 1980s, the three important centres of IS at Baroda, Jadavpur, and JNU had iconic leaders. Together, the three could have leveraged their towering presence and enviable influence among policy circles to create a vibrant intellectual community. Unfortunately, they were unable to build consensus on the future of IS in India or agree on a well-defined plan of action. Finally, the lack of resources and the weak infrastructure that hampers the Indian university system have had a telling impact, particularly on area studies. In building expertise in specific geographic areas scholars need to develop their linguistic abilities or spend time in the respective region familiarizing themselves with the polity and the society. In reality, few Indian area-specialists have the luxury of undertaking prolonged visits to the region they are studying, nor are they able to spend sufficient time learning the region's language. Not surprisingly, then, despite the size of its population and its clear need for the best possible foreign policy thinking in a challenging regional environment, India is under-supplied with specialist policy analysts on foreign countries—even countries in its immediate neighbourhood.

The theory/policy divide in the Indian setting is typically much wider than in the West, although concerns about a growing divide have emerged recently in the United States. Nevertheless, in the United States, foreign policy officials habitually interact with foreign affairs thinkers in universities and think-tanks, and take note of their proposals. After all, some of these scholar-practitioners routinely occupy senior administration

roles, in the State Department, at the Pentagon, and on the National Security Council. In India, on the other hand, a career in the MEA is a job for life, and lateral entry is still highly unorthodox, as are sabbaticals for MEA officials in think-tanks and academic institutions. MEA officials have little incentive to consult think-tanks in developing policy initiatives, although this may be changing to some extent, as considered below. Part of the problem is the closed-shop and elitist nature of the MEA; another, to be fair to the hard-working diplomats, is the reluctance of their political leadership to entrust them with much input into policy in the first place.

From the bureaucrat's point of view, most—often from experience—believe that the work produced in the universities offers no solutions to their professional challenges. How can academic theory or research help manage a crisis with Pakistan, negotiate a civil nuclear deal, or provide initiative suitable for announcement during prime ministerial visits abroad? India's Foreign Service officers are typically dedicated, hardworking, and astute, but the undersized MEA and the proliferation of demands on its attention mean that officials often do not have time to read extensively beyond their files, cables/telegrams, and briefs. Moreover, many officials have no background in the academic discipline of IS and hence do not seek to stay abreast of research in the field (Paul 2009). Shiv Shankar Menon, then India's Foreign Secretary, stated at the Foreign Service Institute (FSI) where young IFS recruits are trained: 'don't get confused with all this international relations theory that is thrown at you all the time and the big words that are used. If you stick to the basic rules about dealing with people, I think you will do very well as diplomats even in a world that is changing at a pace which is quite bewildering for people of my generation.'[2] Menon's quote is illustrative of the prevailing attitude of India's foreign policy bureaucracy. It illustrates why universities have not effected a substantial impact on Indian foreign policy; their influence has often been negative—encouraging inertia in long-standing norms like non-alignment—rather than creative or disruptive.

Role of Think-Tanks

The general public is often confused about what a think-tank actually is, and how it differs from a university. A working definition is that a think-tank relates more directly to informing and influencing government policy; it does not pursue knowledge or an understanding of foreign policy for purely academic purposes. In addition, think-tanks do not typically provide formal education. When academics seek to inform the public or influence officials and leaders about matters of foreign policy, they are moving into the domain of think-tanks. On the other hand, think-tanks tend not to overlap with universities—they do not of themselves offer degrees or conduct 'pure' research.

Even though India has notionally the fourth-largest number of think-tanks in the world after the United States, China, and the United Kingdom, most of its approximately 268 such institutions do not affect or influence foreign policy-making in India in any significant way (McGann 2014). The quality of research in think-tanks specifically

related to foreign and security policy is mixed, and often below world standards, as reflected in the relatively low ranking of most of these institutions, compared to their Western and a growing number of Asian counterparts. There are some notable exceptions. A 2013 survey by the University of Pennsylvania, although somewhat inconsistent and increasingly questioned, nonetheless provides the most comprehensive ranking of global think-tanks to date. It identified three Indian think-tanks in the world's top 100 outside the United States: the Centre for Civil Society, the Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis, and the Energy and Resources Institute. The same survey named six Indian think-tanks in the top 150 in the world including US institutions: the aforementioned three plus the Observer Research Foundation, the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations, and Development Alternatives. (Knowledgeable observers would have expected the National Council for Applied Economic Research, NCAER, and the Centre for Policy Research to figure high on any such list.) Several of these are neither exclusively nor principally foreign policy think-tanks. India performs reasonably when assessed solely against major Asian countries: three of its institutions are in the top 15, although they are scored below their Chinese, Japanese, and Korean counterparts (McGann 2014). For a country that aspires to be a global power and represents the interests of more than 1.2 billion people, that is not good enough.

What are the principal weaknesses of Indian think-tanks? Think-tanks, universities, and indeed the media and general public in India are disadvantaged by a lack of access to policy information. The Official Secrets Act, a lack of a systematic timeline for declassifying diplomatic archives, and the everyday reluctance of bureaucrats to talk candidly to researchers lead to a lack of reliable information about policy. This naturally affects the accuracy and policy-relevance of what think-tanks can generate, even when equipped with quality researchers and the best will in the world.

In most of Indian think-tanks, there is no dearth of former-practitioner expertise in policy-making at medium and higher levels, since retired ambassadors, servicemen, and bureaucrats hold most of these positions. Young graduates who join these think-tanks as research interns, research officers, or research fellows fill the more junior positions. As a former media adviser to the Prime Minister, Sanjaya Baru points out, most of these organizations offer little in the crucial area of middle-level intellectual leadership (Baru 2009). In the absence of a cohort of professional think-tank experts to give strategic direction to research priorities, these institutions risk failing in what should be their core mission. Related to this: if an institution's 'expertise' is predominantly comprised of former and retired policy-makers, with a reputational stake in existing policy, their conclusions will tend to be prejudiced in favour of the status quo, thereby foreclosing new and imaginative policy options to deal with changing circumstances.

Another significant issue plaguing the think-tank sector is a lack of adequate funding. Even though Indian institutions now urgently seek private funding, it remains for the most part elusive. Senior economist Rajiv Kumar, who used to head the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER) opines: 'Indian companies are largely unwilling to fund Indian think-tanks. Brand value and quality may be the main reasons. Indian think tanks will have to raise quality. This they cannot do without

the funding needed to attract talent' (Tiwari 2013). It is a vicious circle: without funding, leading experts are hard to hire; without their output, funding is hard to attract.

India's newly rich business community is yet to grasp the value of think-tanks in an increasingly connected global world involving complex economic transactions and policies. Sanjaya Baru says that while Indian billionaires are willing to give away funds to US-based institutions, a case in point being Sunil Bharti Mittal's contribution to the Carnegie Endowment, most are unwilling to fund Indian think-tanks and research institutions (Baru 2010). In a situation where neither the government nor the corporate sector is willing to fund them, these institutions have been forced either to subsist or to cast their net wider, seeking international patrons.

All these issues notwithstanding, a few relatively successful stories emerge of Indian think-tanks working on foreign and security issues which, even though they may have little direct impact on foreign policy-making, are nevertheless influential in some ways. These include as both platforms for prominent thinkers and as convening hubs where strategic and foreign policy elite can debate and discuss issues of international importance, sometimes engaging with business, media, academics, foreign diplomats, and wider sections of society. These institutions also serve as hubs for 'second track' or informal diplomacy with other nations and their experts—a role increasingly also undertaken by non-government and business entities such as the Confederation of Indian Industry (see Chapter 18).

The oldest think-tank in India is the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA), established in 1943, as noted above. Declared as an institution of national importance, ICWA played host to the Asian Relations Conference in 1947 and the United Nations and its New World Order conference in 1994. It aims to 'to promote the study of Indian and international affairs to develop a body of informed opinion on international matters' and 'to promote India's relations with other countries through study, research, discussions, lectures, exchange of ideas and information with other organisations within and outside India engaged in similar activities'.[3] After lying low for many years and developing something of a reputation as a predictable platform for retired diplomats and the like to discuss familiar issues, the council has boosted its research profile in recent times by hiring a number of fresh PhDs as research fellows and broadening the themes of its annual conferences; in 2013 ICWA challenged Indian and foreign policy thinkers alike to explore the new 'Indo-Pacific' construct and its meaning for policy.

Set up in 1965 after the Sino-India war of 1962, the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) is regarded as India's leading think-tank on strategic issues. Funded by the Ministry of Defence, it functions autonomously and is mandated to produce objective research and policy relevant studies on all aspects of defence and security.[4] The organization ascended under the leadership of an extraordinary individual, K. Subrahmanyam, who had an unquestioned impact on such pivotal security policy decisions as the 1971 war which liberated Bangladesh and the 1974 decision to test a nuclear explosive device. Still one of the better endowed policy research institutes in the country, both in terms of resources and manpower, the institute provides a platform for discussions related to all defence and security related issues. Yet even though the

institute was designed to be a check on government policies and provide critical inputs on official decisions, over the years it has sometimes been found wanting in that respect. Because it is funded by the Ministry of Defence, its recommendations and analysis are often perceived as biased. However, the quality of its publications has improved to the point that *Strategic Analysis* is now a peer-reviewed journal. It is also today more forthcoming and open to original ideas from younger staff working within the organization as officers and research interns.

The Centre for Policy Research (CPR) has also strengthened its reputation among Indian think-tanks. Its International Relations and Security programme now includes a healthy mix of experienced policy-makers and academics. It boasts individuals such as Shyam Saran and G. Parthasarathy, both undoubtedly very influential in shaping India's foreign policy. Shyam Saran is chair of the National Security Advisory Board (NSAB) of which Pratap Bhanu Mehta, the Chief Executive of CPR, was a member in 2012–13. When Mehta's tenure concluded, Srinath Raghavan, Senior Fellow at the Centre, joined the board. In 2012–13 CPR received grants from Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), the Ministry of Urban Development, IDRC Canada, the Hewlett Foundation, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, among others. The major focus of research for the International Relations programme has been Indian Grand Strategy and Indian Multilateral Engagements. The fact that its faculty penned close to 150 newspaper editorial and op-ed page articles on international issues in the year 2012–13 has also served to bolster the organization's influence.[5] Whether or not all its experts influence policy-makers, all are prominent in national and international debate.

The Observer Research Foundation (ORF) is an exception among the list of foreign policy think-tanks in India. Started in 1990, it was one of the first organizations of its kind established by a business group, Reliance Industries. The institute seeks to explore policy initiatives through in-depth research and discussions. It aims to provide informed and valuable inputs for policy and decision-makers in government and business alike.[6] It produces policy briefs, reports, books, and monographs and manages an extremely busy schedule of events and dialogues in India and globally. Over the years it has expanded its footprint and apart from its main office in Delhi, it also now has chapters in Mumbai, Chennai, and Kolkata, with a growing staff base and profile. Notably, ORF is increasingly connecting with policy, for instance as the partner of choice for the Indian government in hosting a range of sometimes sensitive and high-level second track foreign dialogues. Like CPR's, its researchers also publish often in the national media, telegraphing the urgency and policy relevance of their views.

The Role of Individual Actors

Ultimately, like many of India's success stories, the story of Indian foreign policy is more about the influence of certain individuals rather than institutions. To quote K. Subrahmanyam: 'Indian foreign policy was always a leadership function and more

often than not did not command a consensus' (Subrahmanyam 2007). Leaders from Nehru on have succeeded in having their initiatives regarded as national policies. From the decision to go to war in 1971 to opening up the markets in 1991, and from the nuclear tests in 1998 to the Indo-US Civilian Nuclear Deal in 2005, all have been initiatives of individual Prime Ministers. No Indian university or think-tank prepared a blueprint before any of these actions were undertaken, although 1971 owed something to the writings and analysis of K. Subrahmanyam, and the nuclear deal was anticipated and to some considerable degree driven by the work of American think-tank scholar and some-time policy practitioner Ashley Tellis.

Apart from the Prime Ministers, a handful of individuals have had enormous impact on certain aspects of Indian foreign policy over the years. K. Subrahmanyam, regarded as the doyen of strategic studies, was appointed as the second Director of IDSA, a position in which he served twice. While he wrote extensively on issues of foreign policy, defence planning, and technological changes in warfare, his most important legacy was in the field of nuclear strategy (Mukherjee 2011). Subrahmanyam launched a national debate on India's nuclear policy at a time when the subject was taboo, and IDSA has maintained something of a lead in framing the nuclear discourse in India ever since (Raja Mohan 2009). Subrahmanyam was also one of the first serious thinkers to make a case for an interest-based foreign policy in India, challenging the Nehruvian precepts of non-alignment, particularly after the end of the Cold War with a novel openness to closer ties with the United States.

As mentioned earlier, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) wields enormous influence in shaping foreign policy decisions. More recently, the National Security Adviser has emerged as an important figure during moments of crucial decision-making. Brajesh Mishra, J. N. Dixit, M. K. Narayanan, and Shiv Shankar Menon are all seen as very powerful individuals in India's foreign policy decision-making framework. Of late, with the proliferation of print, electronic, and online media, journalist-analysts like C. Raja Mohan, Raj Chengappa, Manoj Joshi, and Siddharth Varadarajan are also seen as influential opinion-makers on foreign and strategic policy. Some, like Mohan and Joshi, have also made their mark in think-tanks and universities, in India and abroad.

Some of the more recent effective work of individuals to inform or influence Indian foreign policy has occurred when small groups of experts and former practitioners have coalesced in a formal advisory role, or to produce a specific report. The work of the National Security Advisory Board—a rare channel for experts to communicate directly with top policy-makers—is the key example of the former. A notable case of the latter was the publication, in 2012, of *Nonalignment 2.0*, a comprehensive panel report proposing a practical and comprehensive range of answers to India's external policy problems. Many accomplished and eminent names were associated with the report, but it was linked to no particular think-tank.

This story of individuals succeeding in foreign policy despite the impediments of Indian institutions extends occasionally to universities. As one of the authors observed in his then capacity as a foreign diplomat posted to Delhi, the early 2000s in particular brought together a critical mass of policy-oriented scholarship and talent at JNU,

with individuals such as Kanti Bajpai and Varun Sahni notable in both public debate and international policy engagement.

The Way Forward

Even though little attention has been paid in the past to the development of foreign policy expertise in India, the heartening fact is that the government increasingly recognizes an urgent need to take remedial steps. To this end, the Ministry of Defence constituted an expert committee to set up an Indian National Defence University (INDU), envisioned to be 'a centre of excellence and innovation for policy-oriented research and teaching on national strategic issues'. Its main purpose will be to 'serve as a think-tank contributing to policy formulation and debates on security and strategy'.[7]

Over the past few years the MEA has opened its doors somewhat, becoming more supportive of convening dialogue with scholars. This includes conferences bringing together scholars of international studies from all over India to reflect on the state of the discipline and debate and discuss issues related to methodology, theory-building, and pedagogy. These efforts not only facilitate connections to enable scholars in different parts of the country to share in each other's work, but also help create a pool of expertise and address the supply-side constraint of the dearth of young PhD researchers working on issues of foreign affairs, strategic studies, and national security. Likewise, in recent years the MEA's proactive Public Diplomacy Division has sponsored occasional Track II or '1.5 track' (composite government/think-tank) dialogues to help advance bilateral relationships at challenging times, such as the Australia–India Roundtable which helped the two states build a broad-based relationship and move beyond bilateral differences over such sensitive issues as Indian student welfare in Australia and Australian uranium sales to India.[8] These dialogues have gained stature with India's foreign policy elite in recent years. Both authors of this chapter have participated in several such dialogues of which the Government of India has been quite supportive. Whether the recommendations issuing forth from these dialogues translate into policy remains an open question. However, there are signs of movement in the mindset of some senior MEA officers, who are at least willing to shed their perceived insularity to opinions from outside the bureaucratic establishment.

The ongoing existence and relevance of the National Security Advisory Board (NSAB) is another positive trend, as it invites the establishment to seek opinions from, and to engage with, external scholars and experts. One author[9] of this chapter has been a member of this board and can vouch for the openness with which these deliberations are conducted.

Yet much remains to be done. One major challenge is for the Government of India to be more forthcoming in opening the national archives after a stipulated duration to better enable Indian policy researchers to test and support their assertions and prescriptions with official data. This will help implement the rigour lacking in most of the

research work of Indian institutions. This should extend to the Nehru Archives, confoundingly still controlled by the late Prime Minister's family.

With respect to foreign affairs and the advancement of India's national interests, the Indian university system is in need of major reform. International Studies needs to find its identity as a stand-alone discipline and not just an adjunct of political science. Young scholars should, as a matter of course, be exposed to policy-relevant research throughout the world. Only a small proportion can receive scholarships or afford to study abroad. However, opportunities for all students can be advanced with Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and Massive Online Open Courses (MOOCs) through both Indian and foreign universities. There are no excuses to deny quality education to the next generation of Indians with an interest in foreign policy, a field crucial to India's future. Area studies programmes should be revitalized and training in relevant languages should be mandatory for students. Adequate funding should be available to promising area-studies students for proper familiarization with the languages and local dynamics of their countries of interest. Otherwise, for instance, China will understand India much better than India understands China, with obvious implications for India's ability to advance and preserve its interests.

The recent trend towards the entry into India of top foreign think-tanks like the Brookings Institution and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace should be welcomed by Indian institutions, and not viewed mostly as competition for funding, staff, and influence. Their presence should compel the domestic think-tanks to raise their quality of research output and enhance their links into government and business.

In a sign that India's think-tank scene is coming of age, India is increasingly recognized as a forum for ideas that matter to the world, not just to India. Think-tanks like ICRIER no longer solely depend on government grants and have established endowment funds to cover administrative expenses and research in areas for which government funds may not be available. Donors to the fund include the American Express Foundation, Bharat Forge, Bharti Airtel, Citi Bank, Deutsche Bank, and the Ford Foundation. India's business and corporate houses need to realize the value of Indian, as well as foreign, think-tanks and see them as long-term investments in a stable, prosperous, confident nation. In addition to Reliance's continued support for ORF, some other household names in India Inc., like Nilekani and Bajaj, have begun to quietly support a range of new voices in the think-tank space, for example the Takshashila Institution.

Indeed, the emergence of Takshashila, India's first 'networked' think-tank, led by young policy entrepreneurs such as Nitin Pai, is an exciting development. It suggests that effective policy institutions need not have real estate and trappings: what matters is quality of ideas, people, and access. The emergence of next-generation voices, more familiar with social media than socialism, and more at home on the internet than in the India International Centre, will also compel established thinkers to try new ways of connecting with policy debates and audiences. The distinguished greybeards of Indian foreign policy are even beginning to show up on Twitter. Likewise, there are promising signs that, just as India is beginning to recognize the advantages of its federal character in engaging with the world, so too the footprint of Indian think-tanks is beginning to

extend well beyond New Delhi. Gateway House in Mumbai and a number of 'branch' offices of ORF are positive manifestations of this, and if the ideas and policy debates generated away from the capital increasingly differ from the familiar discourse within what passes for New Delhi's 'beltway', so much the better for India.

Whatever the ups and downs of India's emergence and engagement with the world this century, it is clear that Indian foreign policy-making is entering an era of great challenge and great possibility. New actors, entities, and interests have arrived on the scene and are here to stay (Malik and Medcalf 2011). India's immense human and intellectual potential, and its traditions of democracy and debate, constitute enormous resources for sound policy-making, to help a growing India navigate a competitive world. Whether this will be harnessed, or remain largely under utilized, will rest on smart leadership in officialdom, academia, and ultimately throughout the political class. It is no longer purely a matter of academic interest, but one which will help determine whether India can adapt to the geopolitical challenges ahead, in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond.

Notes

1. Speech delivered by Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of India on 22nd June 2007 in University of Mumbai. <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx?relid=28780>.
2. Speech delivered by Shiv Shankar Menon, Foreign Secretary at the Foreign Service Institute, Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi on 17 August 2007. In fairness to Menon, he is himself exceptionally well-read and interacted frequently with scholars and thinkers while Foreign Secretary (2006–9) and later as National Security Adviser of India (2010–14).
3. Message of Director General, Indian Council of World Affairs, Amb. Rajiv Bhatia. Available at <http://www.icwa.in/dg.html>.
4. The mission of IDSA can be accessed at <http://www.idsa.in/aboutidsa>.
5. Annual Report 2012–2013, Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi.
6. Founder-Chairman, R. K. Mishra's message, Observer Research Foundation, can be accessed at <http://orfonline.org/cms/sites/orfonline/html/aboutus/cmmsg.html>.
7. Website of the Integrated Defence Staff of India. The Report of the Subrahmanyam Committee and its key recommendations can be found at <http://www.ids.nic.in/dot/dot.htm>.
8. In the interests of full disclosure, one of the authors, Rory Medcalf, is the Australian founder and co-chair of this dialogue, which now involves the Observer Research Foundation, the PD Division of MEA, and several Australian counterpart institutions.
9. Amitabh Mattoo has served as a member of the NSAB.

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CHAPTER 21

MOTHER INDIA AND HER CHILDREN ABROAD

The Role of the Diaspora in India's Foreign Policy

LATHA VARADARAJAN

In January 2003, over two thousand people from around the world arrived in New Delhi to participate in an event that was touted as the 'largest gathering of the global Indian family'. Organized by the Indian Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) at a cost of over $49 million, the event was held in one of the largest fairgrounds within the city. The event was the celebration of the first ever *Pravasi Bharatiya Divas*—literally, the 'Day of the Indians Abroad', inaugurated by then Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee on January 9, 2003. The question of who these 'Indians abroad' were, and the nature of their relationship to the Indian state forms the central focus of this chapter.

In engaging with these questions and explaining the historical evolution of both the Indian diaspora itself as well as its relationship to the Indian state, the chapter makes two basic arguments. One, complex histories of colonial and post-colonial migrations have led to the formation of very diverse emigrant communities with distinct political trajectories and socio-economic interests. Thus, to talk of the 'Indian diaspora' as a unified actor that has consciously and effectively shaped Indian foreign policy is in and of itself a problematic proposition. With this caveat in mind, the chapter advances a second claim: the Indian diaspora has been and continues to remain marginal in the formulation of India's foreign policy.

To explain why this is so, the chapter is divided into three parts. The first discusses the historical evolution of the principal components of the Indian diaspora. The chapter then turns to the question of the Indian state's relationship to this evolving emigrant community. I argue that it is possible to trace two distinct periods in post-independence history, with respect to diaspora actors in the Indian state's foreign policy agenda: the first four decades after independence when diaspora issues were consciously sidelined

from India's foreign policy agenda; and the past two decades which have seen both the official embrace of the diaspora by the Indian state, and the growing visibility of certain sections of the diaspora. The second and third parts of the chapter deal with each of these periods to explain the logic underlying the Indian state's policies and its implications for the role of the diaspora in shaping foreign policy agendas.

This chapter does not address challenges in bilateral relations between India and countries receiving Indian migrant workers, such as those in the Gulf region. The problems (as well as the contributions) of Indian migrants in such countries and regions are addressed in the relevant bilateral relations chapters of the volume.

Identifying the Diaspora

The question of who constitutes a diaspora is one that has been the subject of intense academic debates over the past two decades.[1] The main bone of contention among scholars has been whether the term 'diaspora' should be used primarily to refer to communities that have experienced a version of exile, dispersal, and promise of eventual return (much like the Jewish Diaspora) or whether it deserves to be expanded to include the experience of immigrants, refugees, exiles, guest workers, expatriates, and overseas ethnic communities. While the scholarly argument about conceptual clarity continues unabated, the term itself has become increasingly popular in the rhetoric of policy-makers across the globe. In official rhetoric, the term 'diaspora' has come to stand in as a referent for emigrant communities spread across territorial boundaries. The 'Report of the High-Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora', for instance, begins by stating that it uses the term 'diaspora' to refer to 'Indians who migrated to different parts of the world, and have generally maintained their Indian identity'. While the question of what the maintenance of an 'Indian identity' actually means is far from settled, the point here is that for policy-makers, 'diaspora' is not a contested concept. In fact, it enables them to present what might be a very complex grouping of communities with distinct histories and interests as a more or less uniform group characterized primarily by its continued connection to a common homeland. Keeping this in mind, we now turn to the question of who can be counted as part of the Indian diaspora.

According to the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA), the Indian diaspora is approximately 25 million strong, and spread over all regions of the world, ranging from a mere 20 in Albania to over 2.2 million in the United States.[2] The Ministry further tabulates this group as belonging to one of two categories—Non-Resident Indians (NRI), and Persons of Indian Origin (PIO). The difference between these groups, technically speaking, is a simple one. 'NRI' refers to Indian citizens (those who hold an Indian passport) residing abroad for an indefinite period, regardless of whether it is for business or personal reasons. 'PIO' on the other hand is a much broader category referring not just to first-generation emigrants who have ceded official Indian citizenship, but also second-, third-, and fourth-generation emigrants, and potentially,

their family members as well. But, the existence of these discrete categories is not merely a matter of accommodating differences (marginal or otherwise) in legal status. Rather, it is a reminder of the two distinct waves of migration from India over the course of the past century and a half, and the different trajectories of the emigrant populations that emerged out of these waves. The first of the two waves of modern migration—multi-directional, complex in terms of the class character of the migrants, and spread over decades—began in the colonial period.

Writing nearly a century ago, sociologist Lanka Sundaram observed in a bemused tone that despite the severe lack of even basic necessities, the 'migratory instincts' among Indians, particularly the peasantry was virtually 'non-existent', with 'free emigration beyond the seas ... being unthinkable' (Sundaram 1933: 4). Yet, by 1933 (the year Sundaram's book was published), there were 2.5 million Indians dispersed over various parts of the British Empire, particularly in South-East Asia, South Africa, the Caribbean islands, and the Fiji archipelago. To understand the conditions that both necessitated and made this dispersal possible, we need to turn our attention to the successes of the abolitionist movement in Europe in the early nineteenth century. The official end of slavery meant that European states needed to find an alternative source of cheap labor that could satisfy the demands of both colonial settlers and metropolitan capital. It was this demand that set the stage for the institutionalization of the system of indentured labor. Under this system, from 1860 onwards, shiploads of Indian peasants were sent to work in plantations and mines across not just the British Empire, but also the colonies of France, Denmark, and Holland. Without going into the details of the indenture system (its harshness, its peculiar manifestations across different regions, the way in which it was supported by the colonial state), it is worth noting one of its consequences (see for instance, Tinker 1974). Upon completion of the indenture, a significant group amongst the migrant populations settled in the territories they had been sent to, creating the nucleus of what would become Indian emigrant communities. With the addition of family members (particularly womenfolk), and the migration of certain sections of the business communities, particularly from the southern and western parts of India, the emigrant population grew at a steady pace. By the mid-twentieth century, there were several million people who fell into the category of 'Indians abroad'. This first wave of migrants are the main (though not sole) members of the group categorized as 'Persons of Indian Origin'.

The second major wave of migration from India took place more than a century after the commencement of the first. What distinguished it from the earlier period were a number of factors. For one, the migrants who left India in the period starting in the late 1960s began their journey as citizens of an independent Indian state. As such, the citizenship rights accrued by the migrants and the duties of the Indian state towards them were qualitatively different. Beyond that, the migrations were primarily in two directions, and the direction largely coincided with the skill-level of the migrating populations—the West (predominantly the United States) which drew a steady stream of highly-skilled professionals, and the petroleum-rich Gulf States which became the destination for 'non-skilled' and 'semi-skilled' laborers. Apart from the skill-level, there were many differences between the two groups.

While the migration of one group was seen as a 'drain' of national resources and a matter of concern, the Indian government actually encouraged the migration to the Gulf, seeing it as a means to stem growing levels of unemployment, particularly in some states of India. While the professional migrants to the West had the choice of giving up their Indian citizenship to acquire the citizenship of their host countries (a choice that was exercised by a growing number), the migrants to the Gulf did not enjoy that option. While the migrants to the West were accompanied (or gradually followed) by many among their immediate families, the Gulf migrants were primarily male laborers who were generally separated from their families while they served the duration of their contract. The new post-independence wave of migration created first-generation emigrant communities that continued to be linked through close familial ties to India. It is these communities that are generally referred to as 'NRIs' in popular discourse, despite the fact that a significant number amongst them do not legally fall into this category, having given up their Indian citizenship.

At one level, the binary division of the PIO and the NRIs appears to encapsulate the existing differences among the various groups that constitute the Indian diaspora. However, a closer look reveals a different picture. A 'PIO' could be a fourth-generation emigrant, a descendant of indentured laborers whose connection to India is at best tenuous and symbolic; or this PIO could be a first-generation emigrant who has close familial ties to India. An 'NRI' could refer to an IT professional working in the EU, a doctor practicing in the United States, a contract laborer working in the construction industry in Qatar, or a teacher in Muscat. It is hard to conceptualize what exactly it is that would unify these very different social groups.

Trying to think of the diaspora in terms of its location does not necessarily help overcome that problem. Take for instance, the United States, which is presently home to the largest Indian emigrant community. The roughly 2.2 million individuals said to constitute the Indian diaspora can be broadly divided into NRIs and PIOs. But, that is merely the tip of the iceberg. For once we start breaking the headline figure down, it becomes obvious that this diaspora consists of a wide range of populations differentiated by numerous factors: newly arrived students and descendants of the first Sikh migrants to North America in the early twentieth century, highly-skilled professionals who migrated from India and motel owners who were forced to leave East Africa in the 1970s, entrepreneurs and restaurant workers, IT professionals from Andhra Pradesh and cab-drivers from Punjab. Thus, to talk even of the 'Indian-American diaspora' as a unified actor becomes a problematic proposition.

In this context, it becomes clear that the question of whether the 'Indian diaspora' as a whole has played a role in shaping India's foreign policy is one that cannot be answered in any meaningful way. Rather, we need to reframe our query to ask whether specific sections of the diaspora have played such a role, and if so, when and under what conditions. The next section begins to provide an answer by looking at India's relationship with its diaspora in the aftermath of independence.

Situating the Diaspora

When India became independent in 1947, there were 4 million 'Indians abroad' spread around different parts of the British Empire. The nationalists at the helm of the country considered their relationship to this emigrant population to be extremely important and also critical in shaping India's road to independence. In the words of Pattabhi Sitaramayya, the Congress president, 'Indians abroad, it may look like a paradox to say so, paved the way really for Indian emancipation within the frontiers of India ... We therefore owe all that we *are* to the initiative, the originality, the daring and the sacrifice of Indians abroad' (cited in Rajkumar 1951: 5–6). While somewhat hyperbolic, Sitaramayya's words did have a broader resonance given the history of the nationalist movement.

Starting in the late nineteenth century, the plight of the emigrant indentured laborers had become a critical issue for nationalist leaders like Gopal Krishna Gokhale, who argued that their treatment reflected on the Indian nation as a whole, and as such began to agitate for an improvement in their living conditions. However, the terrain for these struggles extended beyond mainland India. In 1894, the young barrister Mohandas Gandhi led the Indian community in its struggle against the discriminatory South African regime. Though the immediate result was hardly a resounding success, insofar as the broader nationalist movement was concerned, the South African experiment was seen as a manifestation of the willingness of the Indian communities abroad to resist oppression. More importantly, with Gandhi's return and growing stature within the Indian nationalist movement, the strategies developed in South Africa became a model for the ongoing battle against the British Empire. In the aftermath of the First World War, the Indian National Congress (INC) sent a series of missions to South Africa, Malaya, Ceylon, Fiji, Kenya, and Zanzibar to further investigate the plight of the Indian communities in the colonies. These missions served the purpose not just of creating associations that were tied to the INC, as in the case of Malaya, but also underlined the INC's conviction that the problems faced by the Indian nation were not restricted the territory of mainland India.

Wherever they went, emigrants from India were facing institutionalized and often brutal discrimination. While members of various emigrant communities struggled against constant indignities and often succeeded in making small political gains, even these could be overturned at the will of the colonial ruling classes. For the INC, this underlined a simple and undeniable fact of global politics—Indians abroad faced institutionalized discrimination because India was a colonized nation and could not really respond to the needs of her people. The colonial state was not representative of the 'people of India' and did not particularly care if they were mistreated. This was the reason why other countries could enact discriminatory legislative acts against Indians abroad with impunity. The contrast that was usually drawn was with that of China. Some nationalists argued that prior to the Japanese occupation, even though China was not a

necessarily regarded as a great power, it could still afford to look after the interests of its citizens because of its independence. From these arguments, it followed that a government of India that truly represented the Indian people, an *independent India*, would be willing and able to address the plight of the Indians abroad.

In fact, the first approximation at independent governance—the interim government led by Jawaharlal Nehru in 1946—seemed to give credence to this claim. In one of its earliest acts on the international stage, the Indian delegation to the newly formed United Nations confronted the apartheid regime of Jan Smuts over its latest anti-Indian policies, demanding that the matter be resolved by deliberation in the General Assembly. Within a year of this confrontation, India was officially independent, and for all practical purposes in a better position than ever before to make the issue of the 'Indians abroad' a centerpiece of its foreign policy agenda. However, despite its seeming willingness to strengthen its bonds with the overseas Indian communities, the new Indian government adopted a different approach than expected.

In September 1957, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru declared in the Indian Parliament that his government had successfully resolved the question of 'Indians abroad'. While acknowledging that people of Indian origin were facing discrimination in different parts of the world, the Prime Minister framed the Indian government's post-independence policy in terms of a choice that had to be made by the 'Indians abroad' themselves. Indians abroad, the Prime Minister asserted, were at a crossroads. They could choose to claim Indian citizenship, thus officially becoming a part of the independent Indian nation state. In that case, while the Indian state would accept its duties towards them and strive to protect their interests through the means of traditional diplomacy, they could not expect anything other than 'favourable alien treatment' outside of Indian territory. As for those who chose to accept 'the nationality of the country they live in', the Indian state wished them well and in that spirit, exhorted them to comport themselves in their new countries as true citizens, and not exploitative agents (Nehru 1957). At one level, the Prime Minister's declaration took no one by surprise for it was the clearest yet articulation of a policy that Nehru's government had been following since independence in 1947. However, within the broader setting of the anti-colonial nationalist struggle that had led to India's independence, this declaration did seem to mark a dramatic turnaround. So, why did the post-independence Indian state go against expectations and distance itself from the Indian diaspora? The answer, I would argue, lies in both the nature of the anti-colonial struggle that gave meaning to Indian nationalism, as well as the kind of state that came into being after independence. This state, often categorized as 'Nehruvian', was one that emphasized the importance of state sovereignty, particularly in the realm of domestic economic policy. Such a state was both necessary and possible for two reasons: one, the success of Indian industrialists (the capitalist class, as it were) in shaping the contours of the nationalist movement in its final stages; and two, the broader acceptance of Keynesianism and the Bretton Woods system at the global level, that supported state-sponsored developmental initiatives.[3] But, these conditions had an effect beyond just setting the stage for particular economic policies.

By the time India was on the verge of attaining independence, the leadership of the Indian national movement had come to see the movement as something larger than a struggle for purely national freedom. India's freedom was but a part of the larger process of anti-colonial struggles taking place around the world. Given this emphasis, it was not surprising that one of the main foci of Nehru's government was the building of an alliance among the newly independent states of Asia and Africa. Nehru argued that notwithstanding the differences in specific foreign policy goals, the formerly colonized states had a common interest in ensuring true economic development and more importantly, the complete end of the colonial system of rule. To that extent, the foreign policy of the independent Indian state was predicated on the principle of supporting the sovereign right of other newly independent state to decide who their citizens were, and to take the steps they considered necessary to end the exploitative legacy of colonialism.

Some scholars have argued that this 'ideological rubric' emphasizing the respect for territorial sovereignty led the Indian state to simply ignore the plight of the Indians abroad after independence. For them, this was a blunder, and constituted a 'missed opportunity' since the Indian diaspora could have been a valuable political and economic resource (see for instance, Lall 2001). However, the point is not so much that the Indian government ignored the plight of the Indian diaspora. In fact, time and again, it entered into long-drawn negotiations with the host states to arrive at some kind of settlement on their plight. But, it is undeniable that the role of the Indian diaspora in shaping the foreign policy agenda of the Indian state was virtually non-existent in the early decades of independence. The reason for this had less to do with losing sight of the potential of the diaspora, and more with a particular understanding of the very meaning of the independent Indian state. 'India', defenders of the Nehruvian foreign policy agenda argued, stood for certain principles—to fight against colonization, to challenge all forms of exploitative socio-economic relations, and to uphold the right of each country (especially the poorer ones) to nationalize state institutions during these battles. In that context, the foreign policy of the Indian government could not be shaped by anything other than commitment to these values, even if it meant marginalizing the interests of certain emigrant communities.

For instance, though the Indian government declared its willingness to offer repatriation benefits to those Indians who returned from Burma (the country that, apart from Ceylon, had the largest concentration of Indian emigrants at the moment of independence), it did not consider itself obligated to make demands on behalf of the shopkeepers and landowners of Indian origin who were being affected by policies of nationalization. The argument that the Indian state made was that the nationalization policies were being applied without discrimination, and that the PIO had no grounds to object to this either as Burmese citizens or as Indian nationals (Desai 1954). To be good Burmese citizens, the onus was on the PIO to ensure that they 'associated themselves as closely as possible with the interests' of the Burmese people, and not become an 'exploiting agency there', which in this case required the acceptance of the Burmese government's nationalization policies. If they chose instead to give up Burmese citizenship and accept Indian citizenship, then as Indian nationals, 'all they could claim abroad [was] favourable alien

treatment', which in turn meant that they could not expect the Indian state to take special steps to safeguard their properties (J. Nehru, Lok Sabha Debates, September 2, 1957).

Over the ensuing decades, as the plight of Indian emigrant communities not just in neighboring Asian countries, but also in East Asia (particularly Kenya and Uganda) deteriorated, the question of the Indian state's obligations to its emigrant communities was raised constantly in parliamentary debates. However, this did not alter the broader contours of the state's foreign policy agenda. In fact, if anything, what altered was the perception of Indian emigrant communities as victims needing the assistance of the Indian state, in the context of the rising Punjab militancy in the 1980s. It is a matter of public record that significant support for an independent Khalistan came from members of the Sikh community based primarily in Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The support from this diaspora took not just the form of advocacy in the corridors of power and the media, but also financial backing to the groups deemed as insurgents by the Indian state, and the actual establishment of branches of groups like 'Babbar Khalsa'. In one of the most tragic chapters of the long-drawn struggle, members of the Canadian Sikh diaspora were also directly implicated in the 1985 bombing of Air India Flight 182 that resulted in the deaths of 329 people, a disaster that is often categorized as the largest mass murder in Canadian history. Given this situation, it is not surprising that despite occasional moments when the Indian government made formal protests on behalf of its emigrant communities (such as in the aftermath of the Fijian coup of 1987), the Indian government's official policy remained more or less unchanged. It was only in the 1990s that the issue of the diaspora came to the forefront once more.

Reimagining the Diaspora

In 1991, in the thick of a major economic crisis, the Congress-led Indian government of P. V. Narasimha Rao presented a budget that has been regarded as one of the most important and controversial in post-independence history. At the heart of the controversy was not just the fact that the government proposed a major economic restructuring (earlier Indian governments in the late 1960s and the 1980s had already instituted their versions of structural adjustment), but that it did so through a rhetorical disavowal of the Nehruvian framework that had dominated the political landscape. To preserve the 'economic independence' of the country, to 'restore the health of the economy', and to remain competitive in a rapidly changing global environment, the government claimed that India needed to choose a 'different path'. As part of this new path, the budget included policies that made possible the greater involvement of non-resident Indians (NRIs) in the Indian economy by offering them greater incentives and opening up new sectors for potential investment.[4] While the claims made about the NRIs and their connection to India were hotly contested in the Indian Parliament as well as in the media, what cannot be denied is that the embrace of neoliberal economic restructuring

by the government also marked the official re-entry of the diaspora as important actors in public and political discourse.

Over the course of the 1990s, the question of the Indian state's relationship to the diaspora—formerly treated as more or less settled—once again came to the forefront of policy debates. Developments within diaspora communities, particularly in the United States served to facilitate this process. Chief among them was the creation of the 'Global Organization of People of Indian Origin' (GOPIO) in 1989, and the establishment of the 'India Caucus' within the US Congress in 1993. While the former served to provide a semblance of coherence to the interests of a variegated community, the latter suggested the potential for at least a section amongst the Indian diaspora to be conscious political actors in their adopted homeland. GOPIO members, for instance, kept alive the question of institutional recognition of the special place of the diaspora by proposing the idea of a 'Person of Indian Origin' card in their meetings with Indian government representatives in the mid-1990s. Within the United States, politically active lobbyists of Indian origin became de facto spokespersons for the new BJP-led Indian government, particularly in the aftermath of the nuclear tests of 1998. The support of these groups in mitigating the post-tests economic sanctions imposed by the United States, along with their enthusiastic response to the 'Resurgent India' bonds issued by the Indian government in the immediate aftermath of the nuclear tests as a measure to withstand the sanctions, was cited as an important indication of the continued commitment of the diaspora to the homeland. It was a commitment that according to the Indian government needed to be officially recognized in the new millennium.

In August 2000, the BJP government announced the setting up of a 'High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora' that would be given *carte blanche* to engage with all sections of the Indian diaspora and recommend to the government a 'broad but flexible policy framework' to facilitate the involvement of the diaspora in India's development while making it possible for the Indian government to be more receptive to their needs.[5] After meeting with representatives of various diaspora groups and carefully perusing the policies adopted by other countries towards their diasporas, the High Level Committee presented its final report to the Indian government in December 2001. Among its recommendations was the institution of a PIO card scheme that would institute a visa-free regime for people of Indian origin, the establishment of *Pravasi Bharatiya Samman* awards that would recognize the achievements and contributions of Indians Abroad, and the celebration of the *Pravasi Bharatiya Divas* (Day of the Indians Abroad) that would highlight 'the pride of the motherland' in the successes of 'her children abroad', who now numbered over 20 million.

The first such celebration was hosted by the Indian government on January 9, 2003, a date heavy with symbolism since it marked the anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi's return to India after his sojourn in South Africa. Gandhi's return, the speakers at the inaugural *Pravasi Bharatiya Divas* were quick to point out, marked a new stage in the Indian journey towards independence. While the diaspora's 'return' to India remained more figurative, the Indian government made no secret of its hope of a new chapter in what it acknowledged had been a somewhat limited relationship. To facilitate the start of

this new chapter, the government announced several institutional initiatives, the most important among which was the establishment of a Ministry of Non-Resident Indian Affairs (created in 2004, the ministry was almost immediately renamed the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs), and the passage of new legislation that would for the first time in post-independence history extend limited citizenship rights to certain sections amongst the diaspora.

Over the past decade, the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, which positions itself as a 'services ministry' has interpreted its stated goal of building a partnership with the Indian diaspora through a variety of programs including the continued hosting of the *Pravasi Bharatiya Divas* (now an annual celebration), the provision of specific policy measures to facilitate investments from overseas Indian communities, the management of emigration, and engagement with Indian missions abroad to create institutional links with younger members of the Indian diaspora through schemes such as 'Know India' and 'Study India'.[6] Its self-identified constituency consists of the categories of the Indian diaspora already discussed (PIO, NRI) as well as the newly created 'Overseas Citizens of India' (OCI). Passed by the Indian Parliament in August 2005, the amendment of the Citizenship Act (1955) allows certain sections of the diaspora to acquire specific types of citizenship rights.[7] While couched in language familiar to many other diasporas around the world, the OCI scheme does not confer any political rights—it is, in that sense, not similar to the idea of dual citizenship but rather enables eligible members of the diaspora to acquire a life-long visa for visiting India (as against the PIO card that allows a 15-year visa), and have parity with NRIs on all 'facilities available to them in economic, financial and educational fields, except in matters relating to the acquisition of agricultural or plantation properties'.

The goal of these measures is, at one level, quite obvious—in the new millennium, the Indian state has been very committed to the institutional recognition of its relationship to the Indian diaspora, or at least specific sections of the diaspora. Given the dominant policy posture since independence, how do we account for this turnaround? There have been two major explanations of this phenomenon from scholars and political commentators alike, with both focusing on the novelty of the post-1991 reform period. The first of these highlights the long-overdue recognition of the economic potential of the diaspora by the Indian state as the engine spurring these new policy initiatives, while the second (reflecting in many ways the official state rhetoric) emphasizes the 'coming of age' of both India and the Indian diaspora on the global stage. Elements of both explanations deserve to be taken seriously. According to the World Bank, India has over the past few years been the top recipient of officially recorded remittances, with the estimated amount for 2013 expected to top $71 billion, nearly $10 billion ahead of the next recipient, China. However, these figures do not necessarily constitute a causal explanation for the Indian state's changed diaspora policies. Approximately a third of that comes from the Gulf state migrants who have been consistently remitting earnings to the Indian economy since the 1980s, and have not actually been the main targets of the new diaspora initiatives. In addition, as economists have pointed out, the increased remittance flows have been connected to specific economic incentives and circumstances, including

the recent depreciation of the Indian rupee relative to the US dollar. Furthermore, in terms of foreign direct investment (FDI), the Indian diaspora—unlike its Chinese counterpart—has hardly been a significant factor in the past decade. The point here is not to deny the economic potential of the Indian diaspora, or an economic rationale for the evolution of Indian state's diaspora policies. However, this rationale cannot and should not be reduced to merely a question of remittances, or FDI. A more nuanced understanding of the shift in India's diaspora policies needs to engage with the aforementioned 'coming of age' of both India and the diaspora.

The restructuring of the Indian economy was presented by supporters of neoliberalism as aimed at overcoming of the 'self-doubts' that characterized the Nehruvian era, and the expression of 'self-confidence' in the ability to 'compete in the global economy'. This rhetoric, of course, hid the actual social processes at work at both national and global levels. In terms of the global economic climate, Keynesianism which had enabled policies like nationalization, investment in the public sector, and protection of domestic industries (all essential features of the Nehruvian state) had become delegitimized. Domestically, the storied Indian capitalist class that had played a significant role in the nationalist movement and prevailed in the immediate post-independence era had been forced to cede its leadership to a faction that favored privatization. Thus, in embracing the structural reforms, the task facing the Indian state was twofold: one, to dismantle any remnants of the Nehruvian state; and two, to present this not as a failure, but rather a progressive step in the right direction. From this perspective the official re-entry of the Indian diaspora—emblematic of India's global success—onto the main stage of Indian politics makes sense.

At this juncture, another question still needs to be addressed. Does this re-emergence translate into the diaspora having an effect on India's foreign policy agenda? Scholars and policy-makers have argued that much like other significant diasporas in the West (particularly, the Jewish Diaspora), members of the Indian diaspora can be a viable strategic asset, an 'instrument of soft power' in that they can lobby in favor of the Indian state's interests and positions in their respective host countries (Raja Mohan 2003). More specifically, they argue this is the role that can be played by highly organized groups within the Indian-American diaspora, given both the characteristics of this community (its size, wealth, educational levels, and the relatively close connection to India), and the political landscape in the United States (the proliferation of lobby groups, and particularly diaspora lobby groups). And, indeed, Indian-American lobby groups (such as the American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin, the Indian American Friendship Council, the Asian American Hotel Owners Association, and the US–India Political Action Committee) have in the past decade and a half, helped facilitate several India-related outcomes and developments in or relating to the United States. These include President Clinton's visit to India in 2000, the establishment of the 'Friends of India Caucus' in the US Senate, amendments to Pakistan's aid package in the aftermath of the attacks on the Indian Parliament in 2001, and successful promotion of a US–India nuclear agreement in Congress, 2005–8. In this context, the Indian-American lobby has been compared to Jewish Diaspora organizations in the United States, particularly the

American-Israel Political Action Committee (AIPAC), which is generally touted as the most successful diaspora organization, the model to be emulated. John Newhouse, for instance, claimed that given its strong ties to the corporate elite and its network of law and public relations firms, the 'Indian' lobby is the only one in the United States that is likely to acquire the strength of the Israel lobby, although it may take some time before it rivals the latter (Newhouse 2009).

That the Indian-American lobby groups are growing in visibility in American politics is as undeniable as the fact that over the past decade or so they played a perceptible role in the trajectory of Indo-US relations. However, as Devesh Kapur rightly points out, this role has been 'facilitative, rather than causal' (Kapur 2010: 200). In each case of 'successful' lobbying, there were powerful interests in both the US and Indian governments that were pushing for the particular plan of action. Thus, while the organized sections of the Indian-American diaspora have indeed helped push through certain agendas, they have not helped shaped the agenda itself. That the relationship of the Indian state to this diaspora remains far from settled was made obvious by the furor in early 2014 over the arrest of consular official Devyani Khobragade in New York. The fact that an official of the Indian consulate was arrested in public and strip-searched on the charge of a fraudulent visa application and significant underpayment of her housekeeper was itself seen as a source of immense outrage in India. Beyond that, what gave this case a particular piquancy was the fact that the arrest was authorized by the US Attorney in Manhattan, Preet Bharara, a man often touted as emblematic of the success of the Indian-American diaspora.

If this somewhat unsettled, mostly facilitative role is what one can attribute to the most visible and perhaps most influential section of the Indian diaspora, what does it tell us about the effect of the diaspora as a whole on India's foreign policy? Put simply, while the continued presence of older emigrant communities and ongoing emigration to areas like the Middle East, Europe, and North America makes the Indian diaspora a growing presence in world politics, and potentially a political and socio-economic resource for the Indian state, their effect on shaping India's foreign policy goals remains negligible.

Notes

1. For a brief overview of some of the debates, see *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, 1(1), 1991.
2. Tabulating the number of emigrants in order to arrive at the size of a diaspora is a somewhat imprecise science. This is evident even within the pages of the MOIA website, with the main page estimating the size of the Indian diaspora to be approximately 25 million, and the country-wise tabulation arriving at a smaller number of approximately 22 million. See, Ministry of External Affairs, 'Indian and its Diaspora', <http://moia.gov.in/accessories.aspx?aid=10>; and 'Population of Overseas Indians', <http://moia.gov.in/writereaddata/pdf/NRISPIOS-Data(15-06-12)new.pdf>, accessed September 29, 2013.
3. For an elaboration of this argument, see Varadarajan (2010).

4. For details of the budget as well as the general framing of the crisis, see Manmohan Singh, General Budget 1991–92, *Lok Sabha Debates*, July 24, 1991.
5. Press Release, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, August 18, 2000.
6. For a statement of the mission and general organization of the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, see <http://moia.gov.in/services.aspx?mainid=6>.
7. 'OCI' status according to the amendment is available to all persons of Indian origin who were or were eligible to become Indian citizens on January 26, 1950, except anyone who is or had been a citizen of Pakistan or Bangladesh or any other country specified by the Government of India by a notification in the Official Gazette.

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CHAPTER 22

PUBLIC OPINION

DEVESH KAPUR

AMONG the many factors that drive a country's foreign policy, the least understood is the role of public opinion. Foreign policy has always been the one area where governments feel they have fewer domestic constraints in implementing policies. Public opinion on foreign policy is viewed to be largely acquiescent (i.e. latent) or at least implicitly supportive of the policy actions of the government in power. But public opinion can also be 'primed' and strategically manipulated to support (or oppose) policy changes which may challenge long cherished shibboleths, whether compromising on boundary disputes or international agreements, or aligning with new partners. To what extent has public opinion been a constraint on policy-makers in Indian foreign policy? Who is the 'public' in public opinion? And to the extent public opinion has been a constraint, has it been the result of indifference of policy-makers—and in particular India's political leadership—to engage with public opinion or their inability to prime it in desired directions?

In any democracy, there is a presumption of some link, however weak and indirect, between public policy and public opinion, insofar as the latter represents voter preferences. But public opinion's links to foreign policy are more tenuous. Recent literature addressing the question of who shapes and influences a country's foreign policy seems to be in broad agreement that relative to earlier years, foreign policy is evolving from being the preserve of political elites into an arena in which a more diverse range of actors plays a larger role, from business to the media. The advent of 24/7 cable news, the internet, social media, and other platforms for the rapid and constant dissemination of information has irrevocably weakened governments' control over information. But how much better informed is the 'public' on foreign policy issues relative to the past?

Studies of public opinion on foreign policy in the United States continue to demonstrate a marked knowledge gap between the general public and policy elites when it comes to questions of foreign policy. Is public opinion on foreign policy typically anything more than off-the-cuff remarks, something that is more latent than real on most foreign policy issues and acquiescent as long as policies stay within a range of acceptability? While there is considerable convergence between public and elite opinion, there

remain major areas of disconnect (Holsti 2004). These differences need not imply a lack of an opinion on the part of the general public, which while often uninformed, does appear to maintain a set of values and principles that enable it to pass judgment on the foreign policy objectives of the government of the day.

Thus, 'the public hold attitudes about foreign policy, but determining which aspects of those attitudes will get expressed is neither straightforward nor automatic. Elites appear to retain some leeway in shaping the expression of public opinion, but the mechanisms that give them that leeway are still little understood' (Aldrich et al. 2006: 487). It is therefore important to understand what shapes public opinion on foreign policy issues. The information the public gets from the government is subject to problems of framing, selective use of information, and strategic manipulation. The mass media's role is therefore critical.

The information revolution of the recent past has ensured that media sources no longer serve as a passive transmitter of national policy from government to people. Instead, news media in democracies increasingly play the role of independent actor and ultimately shaper of public opinion as regards foreign policy. In particular, when political elites are at loggerheads with each other over foreign policy, the news media plays a pivotal role in making this conflict overt and susceptible to the influence of public opinion. The change in the media's role in shaping public opinion, from trying to ensure acquiescence if not public consent for the government's decisions to 'indexing' the degree of discord among foreign policy elites and acting as a vehicle for these elites to criticize one another, has been highlighted by Aldrich et al. (2006). They argue that a spectrum of views regarding foreign policy objectives is necessary in order for foreign policy issues to play a role in electoral politics, and define three criteria that are needed to ensure public participation in foreign policy discussions: the public must have a set of values or attitudes by which to judge foreign policy; the public must be able to express these attitudes in an election; and the public must be faced with a range of foreign policy alternatives upon which it has a basis to make a genuine choice.

In the Indian case, there have been relatively few analytically sound attempts to gauge public opinion on foreign policy issues, let alone to examine its effects on the country's foreign policy. This essay examines the role of public opinion on Indian foreign policy focusing on four principal questions: One, how have the views of the Indian public on foreign policy been measured and whose views are they representative of? What do these surveys tell us about how informed the Indian public is about foreign policy issues and, relatedly, to what degree is foreign policy the domain of elite rather than mass politics? Two, what shapes public opinion on foreign policy issues in India? Who are the key actors—have they changed over time and issue area? Three, what are the mechanisms that link public opinion to public policy in foreign policy and on what issues has public opinion mattered? Four, what is public opinion about India in other major countries and what does it reveal? Finally the chapter concludes with some observations on public opinion's interactions with changes in other variables and the questions that arise.

Foreign Policy and Public Opinion in India

Foreign policy in India was long dominated by the executive branch. In its early years under Nehru's Prime Ministership, foreign policy was clearly an area of elite rather than mass politics—at least until the disastrous war with China in 1962. While its efficacy may be debated, the combination of Nehru's personal stature and his leadership of India's pre-eminent ruling party underpinned the domestic legitimacy of Indian foreign policy. Popular legitimation meant that public opinion on foreign policy was channeled through the opposition members of Parliament and the print media, which served as the vehicle for opinion-makers. Despite the overwhelming majority of the Congress in Parliament, Nehru's 'personal responsiveness to parliamentary criticism (even by individual members)' was crucial to ensuring Parliament's role in foreign policy (Bandyopadhyaya 2006: 112).

Baru argues that the Congress Party's dominance and a high degree of consensus among mainstream political parties meant that the media played a 'marginal role' and 'did not influence official thinking in any significant way' (Baru 2009: 278). Subsequently, as consensus turned to greater contentiousness with the fragmentation of the Indian polity, this changed. Raja Mohan (2009: 6–7) has argued that K. Subrahmanyam, a key figure in Indian security and foreign policy circles, 'demonstrated the extraordinary possibilities for leveraging the power of the media not only in shaping the public discourse on foreign policy, but also as a tool to mobilise pressure on the politicians and bureaucrats deciding foreign and national security affairs'.

Hence, while public opinion acquiesced in foreign policy decisions, foreign policy elites in turn took into account latent public opinion wherever sensitivities of certain sections of the population mattered, be it religious minorities (in shaping India's Middle East policies), regional groups (such as Tamils towards Sri Lanka), or the majority community (often reflected in hard-line positions vis-à-vis Pakistan). Indeed it could be argued that the fear of adverse public opinion has made it much harder for India to negotiate territorial disputes with China, given the reality that such an agreement can only occur with some give and take on both sides.

Changes in the India's domestic polity, however, suggest that public opinion is likely to play a greater role in shaping the future of India's foreign policies. First, India's political landscape has become more fragmented. As a result executive power has been weakening (especially relative to legislative and judicial branches of government). Fierce electoral competition has meant that swing voters matter more for electoral success. And while foreign policy may not enjoy issue salience with the average voter, if it matters more for the swing voter, then public opinion on foreign policy issues could become a more potent electoral issue. If India's current economic trajectory continues, the swing voter is likely to be urban and more educated. For this demographic, foreign policy issues have greater salience, and hence public opinion on foreign policy will have greater

weight. Therefore even if foreign policy continues to be a domain of elites, should their views differ significantly from those of the population, it could raise serious questions not just about the legitimacy of the policy, but also its resilience to changing political fortunes.

There are few robust surveys of public opinion on Indian foreign policy. The most long-standing survey has been from the Indian Institute of Public Opinion (since the mid-1950s), but it does not appear to have been subject to serious analysis. Cortright and Mattoo (1996) conducted a survey of the opinions of Indian elites on India's nuclear options in 1994 and found that 57 per cent supported the official Indian position of nuclear ambiguity, another third favored the nuclear option while just 8 per cent favored renouncing India's nuclear program. The survey was purposely selective, with a sample of 992 covering seven Indian cities.

Surveys of Indian foreign policy have become relatively more frequent in recent years, but vary considerably in their key characteristics and robustness. These include cross-national surveys such as ones conducted by the Pew Global Attitudes Project and the World Public Opinion Surveys conducted by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs (see the Rielly references at the end of this chapter), as well as Kapur (2009) and the Lowry Institute (Medcalf 2013). A limitation of many of the earlier public opinion surveys was that the sample frame was largely urban, which meant that the sample was unrepresentative of the Indian population.

More recent surveys have become more sophisticated often using a multi-stage stratified random sampling procedure with probability proportional to habitation size and electoral rolls as the sampling frame in urban areas and randomly selected electoral constituencies as primary sampling units. There are concerns about the relatively low response rates and how these are accounted for. Problems also arise related to sampling from voter lists because these are often poorly maintained. In addition, since public opinion research in India needs to be carried out face-to-face, a key issue ignored in these surveys is the possibility of response biases due to respondents giving socially acceptable answers. But perhaps the most important question that is weakly addressed by these surveys is differences within elites and between elite and mass public opinion on foreign policy issues. Often the small sample size does not allow for robust statistical claims to get at the fine-grained differences that capture differences in public opinion across states and socio-economic groups. This is important because a political party with a concentrated electoral constituency may take a strong position based on the need to shore up its political base, even though this might differ from national public opinion. And if it is part of the ruling coalition, the exigencies of coalition politics may still result in a policy being vetoed.

Political and policy elites often deploy public opinion to buttress their case, but in most cases it is unclear whether they are simply invoking public opinion to mask their own preferences or actually reflecting it, and even then which 'public' do they have in mind? The intense partisan political battles at the time India was considering signing a nuclear cooperation agreement with the United States (between 2005 and 2008), triggered claims on all sides that they were responding to

public opinion—but with little evidence. Where did the Indian public stand? How do Indians think about issues with foreign policy implications—and in particular about the United States?

To address the problem of small sample size (and thereby analyze the multiple cleavages in Indian society that create different 'publics') Kapur (2009) conducted the largest ever random, nationally representative survey of foreign policy attitudes of Indians in 2005–6 covering more than 200,000 households. The survey measured the response of nine specific socio-economic (SEC) groups (six in urban and three in rural India), defined by education and occupation. As the largest survey of Indian public opinion on foreign policy attitudes, its findings were revealing.

First, it demonstrated a clear relationship between the ability to respond to questions on foreign policy and socio-economic status. The more elite (defined both by education and occupation), the more likely Indians will be to have an opinion on foreign policy issues. The rural poor either 'don't know' (two-thirds) while another quarter have 'no response', indicating that foreign policy has low salience for them. At the other extreme—educated urban professionals—the figures were a fifth and 6 per cent respectively.

Second, to the extent that Indians express their opinion about the degree of warmth (or positive feelings) towards a country, the broad trends have been clear in recent years. Indians have the warmest feelings towards the United States followed by Japan, with (expectedly) Pakistan at the other end of the spectrum and China in between. This holds true no matter which way the data are segmented—by socio-economic group, income, state, gender, age, or rural/urban.

This evidence is broadly corroborated by cross-national surveys conducted by the Pew Global Attitudes Project and the Chicago Council on Global Affairs over the last decade. In both surveys on global public opinion, India consistently ranked near the top of the list in its confidence in and support of the United States. This has not always been the case, however. In 2002, the percentage of the polled Indian population expressing a favorable opinion of the United States, at 54 per cent, was in the lower half of the countries polled. In 2005, the percentage shot up to 71 per cent, the highest of any country polled. In the Pew Global Attitudes Survey conducted in 2007, India ranked 14th among the 47 nations (most of the others above it were African countries), with 59 per cent of the public holding favorable views of the United States. Most recently (in 2013), a survey by the Lowy Institute of Australia found that Indians rank the United States first, followed by Singapore, Japan, Australia, and Russia. Other than Russia, Indians feel warmer towards these countries than those in the BRICS group (such as South Africa, Brazil, and China) with which India is often seen to share diplomatic or economic interests.

Third, respondents in higher socio-economic groups in India have warmer feelings towards the United States. This may be so either because the elites are more informed about the United States or because they benefit more from a relationship with that country. More interestingly, however, the weaker socio-economic groups also unambiguously prefer the United States relative to other countries. Thus, while

Indian elites may like the United States more in absolute terms, weaker segments of society appear to value a relationship with the United States more than that with other countries.

Fourth, despite the social, economic, and political diversity across Indian states, the warmer sentiments towards the United States are valid across all states. Even in states with strong left parties which are the most vociferous opponents of closer relations with the United States (Kerala and West Bengal), respondents clearly prefer the relationship with the United States over the relationship with China. Kapur (2009) also did not find any statistical difference in states with a higher Muslim population and those with a low concentration of Muslims, although individual level data on religious beliefs and foreign policy attitudes require more research.

Fifth, broad public opinion on foreign policy indicates that the Indian public is not naïve and indeed demonstrates a streak of pragmatism. For instance despite its warm sentiments towards the United States, it ranks that country low both in terms of trustworthiness and how aggressive it feels the US government to be. This is perhaps why, in response to another question on India's dealings with foreign governments, the majority of respondents felt that the Indian government should be tougher in its negotiations with the United States (Kapur 2009). Thus while Indians see the United States as worthy of emulation they are also wary of US power. This could either be because they are bothered by the accumulation of power (no matter who has it) or it could instead be a hangover of Cold War alliance dynamics or indeed even cultural differences.

This streak in Indian public opinion is further confirmed by the findings of the 2011 Lowy Institute poll: 83 per cent of Indians considered US–India ties to be strong and a further 75 per cent wanted US–India ties to strengthen in the near future. Nonetheless, a significant minority of 31 per cent believed that the United States posed a threat to Indian interests, perhaps because of perceived US support for Pakistan. The Lowy Institute survey noted that while 72 per cent of Indians believe the United States can be a good partner in Indian Ocean security, a higher percentage—84 per cent—want India to have the most powerful navy in the Indian Ocean, which appears to reflect an increasing desire for India to assert its status as an emerging power. Perhaps most emblematic of Indian public opinion towards the United States (according to the Lowy survey) is that 78 per cent of Indians believe that it would be to their benefit if India was more like the United States. Whether this means that Indians simply want to be as rich and powerful as the United States or something else is, however, unclear.

Sixth, to the extent that elites matter most in shaping foreign policy, two features of their responses were especially noteworthy in the survey by Kapur (2009). One, they held more intense beliefs than all other socio-economic groups. For instance they harbored warmer feelings towards both the United States and China but also colder sentiments towards Bangladesh and Pakistan. Second, the variance in views of this group was least compared to all other groups. As Indian elites become more socially heterogeneous, it is unclear if this will hold true in the future.

Factors Affecting the Public's Views on Foreign Policy

Given an increase in public opinion polls, questions arise over how one should interpret them, given the effects of framing, priming, and the like. What are the relative roles of policy-making and policy-influencing elites, whether within the legislative or executive branches or the news media and opinion leaders? How does the government make selective use of information and strategic manipulation to shape public opinion? For that matter how do 'opinion leaders' and opposition parties try to educate or manipulate public opinion?

There is broad agreement on the growing role of mass media in shaping public opinion with shifts in the media's role from a passive transmission mechanism that informed the public of the views of opinion-makers, to a more activist role. The former was perhaps especially the case of the English print media in India. Increasingly, however, the advent of 24/7 TV news and the electronic platforms has made the media an independent actor in its own right, its priming effects on public opinion evident in a range of cases, sometime forestalling, sometimes goading the government to act and circumscribing the traditional autonomy of foreign policy elites.

The interplay between a changing media landscape—a far more competitive market-driven industry with new technologies and a younger scrappier viewership—and public opinion is a complex story (Pandalai 2013). The pre-cable network era 'manufacturing consent' model held that news on security and foreign policy was largely in line with the policies shaped by elites and by the government of the day. The subsequent 'CNN effect' model took into account the rise of 24/7 cable news coverage. This type of news coverage could 'make policy'. The pressures of real-time news coverage that does not abate, means that governments must respond to news rather than news to governments.

More recently, the 'Al Jazeera' effect mixes social media in with news media. As groups used social media during the Arab Spring, Al Jazeera not only played coverage of the events, but also of the planning and methods devised to produce the events. Highlighting social media as the means for action alerted the watching public not just to what was happening, but to how they could get involved. In return, Al Jazeera knew where the action was going to take place. This symbiotic relationship that fuses multiple media forms, in which posts can go viral in minutes, swiftly shaping public opinion before governments even realize what is happening, poses new and unnerving challenges for all governments.

It is probably still the case that the news media influences public opinion and thereby foreign policy, rather than sculpting or determining policy. The news media pushes a government towards action, forcing it to speed up the decision-making process, with negative coverage being especially potent in this regard. It is more likely to influence symbolic, highly visible agendas with intense emotional characteristics, rather than

substantive agendas. However, the media is also often the sounding board for governmental policy decisions in general, including foreign policy. And the extent to which governmental elites react to the media, or are beholden to it, is still somewhat contingent on the quality of leadership of the government of the day—and as noted below, importantly on the so far limited role of Parliament.

The interplay between a rising assertive middle-class with 24-hour private satellite news is a new factor in the Indian political and social matrix affecting public opinion. It has spawned anti-corruption movements (like the Anna Hazare movement) and new political parties (such as the Aam Admi Party). Many members of this middle-class are globalized, with some being part of the expanding Indian diaspora, and public opinion on foreign policy cannot ignore what affects this diaspora. Several examples illustrate the consequences of this potent brew on Indian foreign policy.

For instance when there were incidents of attacks on Indian students in Australia during 2007–10, a slow news period led the TV networks to frame the issue through the lens of race and not criminal behavior. The Indian TV media's blanket coverage of this issue forced the Indian government to treat it as a race matter in its dealings with the Australian government. Stories of India's interactions with Australia were contextualized within the assertions of a highly mobile and visible diaspora, expressing the aspirations of a resurgent post-colonial nation. The rapid buildup of public opinion via the Indian media forced the government to make this a central issue in its dealings with Australia, crowding out other important issues in the bilateral relationship.

In early 2013 news reports that two Indian soldiers had been killed by their Pakistani counterparts on the disputed border in Kashmir and one of the bodies had been decapitated sparked full-blown outrage in the Indian media. The story dominated prime-time talk shows, a format that inevitably favors stridency over thoughtfulness, and essentially shut down a sputtering peace process. As is usually the case, the reality was more complex and nuanced, but a government undermined by scandals simply could not afford to appear 'weak'.

The deterioration in India's relations with the United States stemming from the arrest of Indian diplomat Devyani Khobragade in New York in December 2013 was yet another noteworthy instance of this phenomenon. In this case what was interesting was a clear divide in public opinion not just between India and the United States, but between the Indian-American community and Indians (in India) with the former more outraged by the treatment of a maid by the Indian diplomat and the latter by the treatment of the Indian diplomat by US authorities.

However, while a strident media undoubtedly inflamed public opinion in India, it raised a harder question. Just how strong were the ties between the world's largest and oldest democracies, whose common value systems supposedly make them 'natural allies', that an incident involving a diplomat and a maid could so easily threaten to derail the relationship itself? Or was it the case that the much ballyhooed relationship had been weakening over the past few years and that the incident simply laid bare this reality?[1] Public opinion was certainly not the reason why the foundations of the relationship eroded. The root causes of that lay elsewhere—squarely with two distracted and

fumbling governments having allowed the economic, security, political, and bureaucratic stabilizers of their relationship to weaken.

Mechanisms Linking Public Opinion to Foreign Policy Decision-Making

What are the mechanisms that channel public opinion on foreign policy? For instance is the legislative branch a conduit for the public view because that branch of government is closer to the people? If so, a key institution that might link public opinion to pressure on the executive is Parliament.

Parliaments intervene primarily in foreign policy through enactment of laws related to sovereignty and national security. Members of Parliament can use parliamentary instruments such as question hour, committee meetings, and budget approval processes, all of which provide opportunities to engage the government.

However, the Indian Parliament's role in either channeling or shaping public opinion on foreign policy issues has declined in recent years. The Standing Committee on External Affairs hardly ever discusses foreign *policy*. An analysis of reports of the Standing Committee of Parliament attached to the Ministry of External Affairs—23 during the 14th Lok Sabha (2004–9) and 25 during the 15th Lok Sabha (2009–14)—reveals not one report related to policy stance.[2] The Standing Committee's reports on the budgets of the Ministry of External Affairs reflect an accountant's view, not a policy and strategic one.

MPs also rarely raise questions in Parliament on foreign policy—an average of just over 24 questions annually over all sessions of Parliament between 2011 and 2013. The questions were mainly about passport offices, permits for the Muslim *Haj* pilgrimage to Mecca, attacks on members of the diaspora, and some policy related questions with regard to India's neighbors. The fact that Parliament rarely discusses issues of foreign policy reflects in part the fact that it has not been discharging its role in discussing government policies more widely, a reflection of the broader problems afflicting the institution.

Two examples illustrate Parliament's weakness. During the Kargil war in 1999, the Lok Sabha stood dissolved and the opposition parties and the media called for a special session of Parliament to discuss the issue. But Prime Minister Vajpayee refused to convene one, removing any parliamentary scrutiny of the Executive. In the aftermath of the 2008 Mumbai terrorist attacks, the opposition vacillated between criticizing Pakistan's role on the one hand and the Indian government's woeful security response to the attack on the other. By amplifying often insignificant problems while ignoring serious questions, Parliament's self-inflicted near- irrelevance has meant that the form for channeling public opinion on foreign policy has shifted to the media (within which a small number of opposition and government parliamentarians do express themselves, often eloquently).

Indian foreign policy elites do appear to be mindful of latent public opinion wherever sensitivities of certain sections of the population are at play, be it religious minorities (in shaping India's Middle East policies), regional groups (such as Tamils towards Sri Lanka), and the majority (Hindu) community (often reflected in hard-line positions vis-à-vis Muslim Pakistan). While direct evidence on these questions is lacking, some examples illustrate this syndrome.

India's relations with Sri Lanka have been bedeviled by that country's treatment of its minority Tamilian community, given their ethnic links with the southern state of Tamil Nadu. While not unmindful of public opinion in that state, however, for the most part there is little evidence that the central government allowed it to unduly influence Indian foreign policy towards Sri Lanka. With regional parties running the state since the late 1960s, the central government had little incentive to pay much heed to public opinion there, since it was after all a small fraction of overall public opinion in the country. Even the support that the Indian government provided to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in the early 1980s was driven more by the central government's calculus rather than in response to public opinion in Tamil Nadu. More recently, however, with coalition governments becoming the norm, regional parties from the state became part of the coalition government in Delhi and acquired greater voice. And to the extent that central governments have to heed public opinion in the states which form their political base, a new transmission channel from regional public opinion to Indian foreign policy has become established.

Hence it is not surprising that contrary to its long-standing policy of not voting on country-specific resolutions, in 2012 and 2013 India voted against Sri Lanka at the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC). At the time the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) was part of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) and it acted on its perception of public opinion in that state (although there is little independent evidence of exactly what that opinion might be). However, in 2014 when the same issue was brought before the UNHRC, India abstained. This time the DMK was no longer part of the UPA coalition and the transmission belt from public opinion in the state to the central government on the UN vote had snapped.

Two additional examples are illustrative. In 2011, the Indian government had reached an understanding in principle with the Bangladesh government to sign a treaty to share the waters of the Teesta River, which flows into that country from West Bengal, and thereby reciprocate the positive steps taken by the Sheikh Hasina-led government. However, this was vetoed by another coalition partner, the Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress (TMC), fearing that her opponents would use it against her in the next election. However, in this case even when the TMC left the coalition government, the central government did not sign the treaty, perhaps fearful that with national elections around the corner, it might lose even the few seats it held in that state.

Another case which was still unresolved at the time of writing was that of two Italian marines who had shot dead two Indian fishermen from Kerala in 2012 in waters within India's exclusive economic zone during an international anti-piracy campaign in the Persian Gulf and the Arab Sea (in which India was also participating). They were

arrested and the incident has become a bone of contention between the Indian and Italian governments, with conflicting opinions over legal jurisdiction and immunities. Public opinion in the state of Kerala appears to have influenced the Indian government's stance, especially since the Defense Minister at the time was from Kerala, and doubtless mindful of public opinion in his home state.

Public Opinion in Other Countries About India

A parallel question to whether and how Indian public opinion affects the country's foreign policy is the nature of public opinion about India in other countries and its effects on Indian foreign policy (Mukherjee 2013). Despite the self-perception of Indian elites, public opinion in key countries was for long either apathetic about India—a reflection of the reality that India was neither a threat nor an opportunity for them from the 1960s to the mid-1990s—or ambivalent. This has, however, changed noticeably in the new millennium.

In the United States, favorability ratings toward India were relatively stable at a middling level of 45–50 per cent through the 1980s until 2001. Subsequently, post 9/11 and the terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament (Chicago Council and Gallup), favorability ratings toward India have been relatively high, between 65 and 75 per cent, for much of the past decade (Figure 22.1). The question on which there has been a significant spike is whether the United States has vital interests in India. Between 1979 and 1999 fewer than 37 per cent of Americans believed this was the case. This sharply jumped to 65 per cent in 2002 and further increased to 77 per cent in 2011, more than twice its modest level for many decades. Similarly the percentage of Americans who view India as an ally grew from 49 to 78 per cent from 2000 to 2013, indicative of the development of closer relations between the two countries.

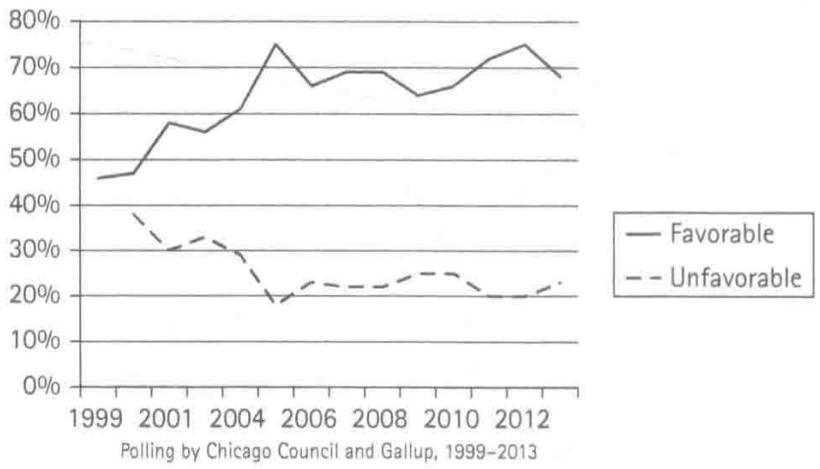

FIGURE 22.1 US public favorability ratings on India, 1999–2012.

Overall, however, worldwide perceptions of India's influence in the world are sobering. In a BBC poll of over 26,000 respondents in 25 countries in early 2013, 34 per cent of respondents felt that India had a positive influence on the world while 35 per cent felt that it had a negative one, making it the first time since 2005 (when this polling began) that negative views of India outstripped positive views. India was ranked 12th of 16 countries and the European Union (EU).

Unsurprisingly India's favorability ratings in both China and Pakistan are low. Interestingly, in the case of China, views towards India and the United States have converged, although a minority (a quarter) views the two countries as hostile to China. In Pakistan, India is no longer the country viewed least favorably—the United States has taken those honors from India.

While India is viewed relatively favorably in Africa and some Asian countries (especially Japan and Indonesia), unlike the United States, views of India in other industrialized democracies such as Canada, Germany, and France (and indeed the EU at large with the exception of the United Kingdom) are much more negative. Why this is the case is puzzling. It might reflect the fact that India has opposed many of the international issues that the EU has championed—whether on the Doha Round of global trade negotiations, climate change, or the International Criminal Court—reflecting in particular very different views on sovereignty. It is possible that the presence of a large, successful diaspora in the United States has created more positive views of India in that country. This, however, would not explain why neither Canada nor Australia, both of which also host a large Indian diaspora, has such highly negative views of India.

What opportunities or potential obstacles does public opinion about India present for Indian foreign policy? There is little analysis on this issue and there is a need to understand whether (and how) the opinions of international publics matter for it.

Conclusion

If India's economic growth continues, its relatively low income notwithstanding, the country's sheer size will give it greater heft in the international system. Consequently foreign policy will necessarily play a bigger role in Indian policy-making. But the very economic growth that will drive this trend will also result in a public that has higher incomes, is more educated and urban, and has much greater media exposure. Public opinion will both interact with, and be shaped by, other variables relevant to foreign policy in India such as the rise of business and a more federal polity. While domestic issues will be paramount for the most part, the growth of the urban middle class will ensure that public opinion will be less docile, more opinionated—and more unpredictable—on issues of foreign policy.

The need to more actively mold public opinion and react more rapidly to events led to the creation of the Public Diplomacy (PD) Division within the Ministry of External Affairs in 2006. The PD division defines public diplomacy 'as the framework of activities

by which a government seeks to influence public attitudes in a manner that they become supportive of its foreign policy and national interests'. Its Mission Statement is to 'put in place a system that enables us to engage more effectively with our citizens in India and with global audiences that have an interest in foreign policy issues'. It recognizes that a 'key facet of Public Diplomacy is that it goes beyond unidirectional communication; it is also about listening to a range of actors ... It requires systems that acknowledge the importance of an increasingly interconnected world where citizens expect responsiveness to their concerns on foreign policy (and other issues)'.[3]

However, it will take more than a bureaucracy to be responsive to, and mindful of, public opinion. In a democracy, it is fundamentally the responsibility of elected leaders not only to respond to, but also to shape, public opinion. Some of the most serious foreign policy challenges facing India require it to negotiate settlements with its neighbors as well as the global community (such as on climate change), which in turn means that India will have to make some concessions if its negotiating partners are to do likewise. That would require molding and shaping public opinion to prepare for this eventuality—but, sadly, there are few signs that those charged with this responsibility appear mindful of this challenge. Not just in India but the world over, political leaders need to be mindful of public opinion in formulating foreign policy, but not fecklessly, which would run the risk of becoming its captive.[4]

Notes

1. See Devesh Kapur, 'Divided by Democracy', *Business Standard*, December 22, 2012. <http://www.business-standard.com/article/opinion/devesh-kapur-divided-by-democracy-113122200641_1.html>.
2. I am grateful for M. R. Madhavan of Parliamentary Research Services (PRS) for providing access to these reports.
3. Mission Statement, Public Diplomacy Division, Ministry of External Affairs. <http://www.aseanindia.com/about/organisers/pdd/>, accessed February 20, 2015.
4. I am grateful to Alex Polyak for research assistance and to David Malone and Rohan Mukherjee for their comments and helpful suggestions.

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CHAPTER 23

INDIAN SCIENTISTS IN DEFENCE AND FOREIGN POLICY

JAIDEEP A. PRABHU

Introduction

It is difficult to conceive of foreign policy without considering trade; it has been so for centuries. In the post-Second World War years, the same can be said of science and technology. A knowledge economy existed in previous eras too—ballistae, trebuchets, gunpowder, the *trace italienne*, the spinning jenny, the steam engine, and other inventions and innovations periodically gave their owners a temporary advantage on the battlefield or in the markets until others caught up. However, high science and technology became more intertwined with the state in modernity—only the government had the resources to finance ever more expensive research and development, and the state stood to benefit most from the resulting information asymmetry.

In this chapter, I focus primarily on India's nuclear and defence research establishments. The reason for this prioritization is that as a developing country, India has hardly developed significant electronics, industrial machinery, or intellectual property of its own yet; it has been a client of the developed world and had little conflict with vendors in matters non-pecuniary. However, the nuclear and defence industries are necessarily highly secretive, and licensed production, purchases, and indigenous development take on political dimensions as well as financial and technological.

The domination of physics in the twentieth century—in heavy industry as well as the electronics revolution—also means that enclaves like biological sciences and pharmaceuticals are ignored in this chapter. Furthermore, I delve into more detail in the period until about 1980 because of the availability of foreign ministry archives which inform this piece.

Science Before 'India', 1930–1947

India's initial forays into nuclear research began not with independence but actually in step with the early and exciting breakthroughs in Europe. As some scholars have argued, physics was not of interest to the imperial agenda as medicine or biology were, and it was left to function in the traditional scientific public sphere, both national and international, and centred around individuals and universities. Several Indians who would later go on to establish nuclear research in India were graduate students under leading researchers in Europe and the United States in the late 1920s and early 1930s at centres of nuclear research like Cavendish Laboratory, Cambridge University, the Radiation Laboratory at the University of Berkeley, Manchester University, Friedrich Wilhelm University, and the Sorbonne.

The late 1930s saw a subtle but fundamental shift in the patronage of science. As the tools of physics became bigger, more complex, and astronomically expensive, individual laboratories and universities could not continue to fund their research. The state was the only entity that could serve as a patron for scientific curiosity-driven research, the applications of which were not quite clear yet. However, the discovery of the nuclear chain reaction by German scientists Otto Hahn and Lise Meitner in 1939 made the potential of nuclear technology abundantly clear and increased the urgency to find a financially willing patron for nuclear research. State funding for nuclear physics research meant that national needs were prioritized, and the nature of the research and its potential defence applications immediately dictated that it would no longer have the luxury of free and public enquiry.

The late 1930s and 1940s were a momentous period in Indian history as well. In addition to the shifting of science patronage from universities to the state, it marked a transition from imperial rule to independence and of the end of one world order early on to the beginning of the Cold War only months later. The confluence of these three paradigm shifts found scientists at the centre of international relations and policy-making. India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, was himself a modernizer and subscribed to the modernist imperative of nuclear technology. Nehru was keen to ensure that his fledgling republic would derive all the benefits of universal science and not fall behind the industrialized world again. He was very keen on bringing the scientific revolution to India (Zachariah 2004: 27). Upon the establishment of the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) in 1942, Nehru had told Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar, its first director, 'You and I must never spare ourselves but do everything to bring about a scientific revolution.' His sympathetic ear eased the creation of a nuclear elite in India that would inform foreign policy on pertinent matters from time to time.

The first intimation of the post-war scientific order, perhaps clearer in hindsight, came even as Indian scientists studied in the United States and Europe. The top-secret Manhattan Project spirited away many of the best minds in physics, chemistry, metallurgy, and other related disciplines; a hush descended over scientific research with

military implications and Indians were turned away from several sensitive projects. However, with independence in sight, there was great demand for trained scientists in the future India. The Institute of Nuclear Physics in Calcutta, the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR) in Bombay, and the Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore led the way in the creation of a scientific establishment in the country and qualified people were personally recruited by India's top scientific minds such as Bhatnagar, Nobel laureate C. V. Raman, renowned astrophysicist Meghnad Saha (of Saha Equation fame), and Homi Bhabha, a close friend of Jawaharlal Nehru and a cosmic ray physicist who would become the chief architect of the Indian nuclear programme.

While the nuclear field attracted the most attention, there was also considerable impetus to develop military research in India during the Second World War. Concerned by the rapid Japanese successes in South-East Asia, the British appointed Bhatnagar as the Director of Scientific and Industrial Research for war-related research in 1940. Two years later, the CSIR was established in India to oversee the creation, administration, and research of several 'national laboratories' throughout the country that could contribute to the war effort. London was aware, however, of India's minuscule potential for contribution and little help came to the CSIR from the imperial coffers nor did London help with skilled manpower.

Although the nuclear age dawned with the Trinity test at Alamogordo, a military event, the peaceful as well as military potential of the atom had been speculated upon simultaneously; Indian scientist R. S. Krishnan had postulated as early as 1942 that the energy released from uranium fission could be used for peaceful purposes. The atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki underscored for Indian scientists and leaders alike the cost of falling behind in science and technology, and though Nehru declared in 1946 that India would not like to pursue nuclear weaponry, Raman explicitly referred to the atomic bomb as the rationale for atomic research in a January 1947 letter to the Atomic Energy Research Council (Phalkey 2013: 125). Thus, by independence, Indian science was already destined to make an impact on its foreign relations.

Scientific Optimism and the Early Republic, 1947–1962

Soon after the war's end, Bhabha reached out to his friends in Europe for help in creating a world-class nuclear research establishment. The Cold War and interstate rivalry had already riven the scientific community and many former colleagues were unable to honour Bhabha's requests even had they wished to. However, Bhabha realized that India possessed something the industrialized powers sought—monazite—and sought to trade the ore for technological assistance. In a highly politically polarized period, India's non-alignment irked the United States, but Delhi's close ties to Britain, its remaining in the Commonwealth, and its parliamentary democracy allayed fears somewhat. Several

British scientists, most with pre-independence ties to India and Indian scholars, such as Mark Oliphant, Patrick Blackett, John Cockroft, J. B. S. Haldane, and Archibald Hill were willing to advise India on the direction its nuclear and scientific research should take.

International Cold War politics, however, also affected science. It was well known that Frederic Joliot-Curie had communist sympathies and the United States had urged France to reconsider its decision to appoint him to head France's nuclear research. Bhabha had approached Joliot-Curie in 1949 with an invitation for a two-year stint in India. He hoped that Joliot-Curie would train Indians in nuclear chemistry and help establish a facility for monazite processing. Although Joliot-Curie had initially expressed interest in the idea, he eventually turned it down. However, the French were keen to develop nuclear relations with India and Joliot-Curie consulted with the Indian Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) and met its senior scientists and the Prime Minister. In fact, France was willing to discuss uranium enrichment, fuel manufacturing, and the design of a low-power reactor to start off the Indian nuclear programme in exchange for raw materials like thorium, uranium, beryllium, and mineral oil of animal origin.

The early years of the nuclear era were quite different from the current ones; concerns about nuclear proliferation and safeguards did not exist, and even when they did, were brushed aside in favour of more immediate economic or strategic benefits. There was, in fact, a fierce competition between states with nuclear technology to sell their wares to other countries and in acquiring raw resources for their programmes. While some, like the United States, had a large enough domestic market, others, like Canada, were faced with the choice of either shutting down their nuclear industry or vying for exports. The Indo-French nuclear agreement was therefore seen as a blow to British interests in India. Given the broad scope of the agreement and India's limited resources, Britain would have only a limited role to play in India's nuclear programme. London made its displeasure known to Bhabha the very next time he wrote to consult with his friends at the British Atomic Energy Research Establishment: Cockroft gave him a polite brush-off, explaining that Britain was preoccupied with research of its own.

While nuclear research was seen as the pinnacle of modern achievement, India's leaders were also aware that their country lacked basic infrastructure. In the period of the first two Five-Year Plans, large-scale irrigation projects were launched, such as the construction of the Bhakra, Hirakud, and Mettur dams, the prestigious Indian Institutes of Technology were commissioned, large steel mills such as the ones at Bhilai, Durgapur, and Jamshedpur were constructed, railways and roads were added to the network, and coal production was increased. Defence research was kept to a minimum, but Nehru was pragmatic: 'Modern defence as well as modern industry require scientific research both on a broad scale and in highly specialised ways', he argued. 'If India has not got highly specialised scientists and up-to-date scientific institutions in large numbers, it must remain a weak country incapable of playing a primary part in a war.'[1] Scientists and their institutions were thus portrayed as crucial components of the state in peace and especially in war.

India's first nuclear reactor, Apsara, a 1 MW research pile, came online in 1956, and was built with British assistance by the Atomic Energy Establishment, Trombay (AEET). Nonetheless, the experience of constructing it was a great boost to the confidence of

India's scientific community. Though Apsara was not a beneficiary of the Atoms for Peace initiative launched by US President Dwight Eisenhower in 1955, the initiative facilitated India's negotiations for technology and components.

In 1957, Nehru sanctioned the construction of a heavy water producing facility in Nangal, Punjab, to be constructed with West German assistance. By 1958, 'the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) consumed one-third of India's research budget', and by 1959, the AEET employed over a thousand scientists and engineers.[2] India's second reactor, CIRUS (Canadian–Indian Reactor, US), was purchased from Canada and went critical in July 1960. India could then easily import natural uranium from Canada and heavy water from the United States for the 40 MW reactor. The Indian negotiating team vehemently argued against the application of safeguards to the reactor. The Canadians and the Indians finally agreed that the fuel received from foreign sources would be safeguarded while Indian fuel would not. Interestingly, India had already built a reprocessing plant in 1958 with US assistance, giving India the capability to reprocess spent fuel from CIRUS for its breeder programme in the future or for weaponization.

These projects put India's scientists at the forefront of Indian energy policy, and in later years would give them a say in the country's defence policy as well. Their prestigious role as the high priests of science in India's 'modern temples' would also give them a say in its nuclear policy, a position from which they would turn out to be staunch opponents of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and defenders of India's absolute rights over the nuclear fuel cycle. Undoubtedly, Bhabha's close personal relationship with Nehru also helped advance nuclear and defence research.

However, their role should also not be overstated—during the first UN Conference on Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy in Geneva in 1955, Bhabha wrote to Nehru proposing that 'India should amend its constitution, renouncing nuclear weapons. Nehru replied, advising Bhabha to concentrate on development of the nuclear programme and to inform him when the stage was reached when India could make nuclear weapons. He asked Bhabha to leave political and strategic issues relating to nuclear energy in his hands.'[3]

Science at War, 1962–1974

The Chinese attack on India in 1962, even though it was restricted to the border area, galvanized India's defence research community into action. Indian parliamentarians demanded that Nehru initiate a nuclear weapons programme, and the defence expenditure on conventional forces increased from slightly over 1 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) just before the war to approximately 4 per cent during the mid-1960s when Lal Bahadur Shastri was Prime Minister. In real terms, defence expenditure jumped from Rs. 2.89 billion in 1961 to Rs. 9.1 billion in 1966. Defence planning was systematized—the first Five-Year Defence Plan was drawn up, and attention was paid to defence supplies, intelligence, and the wider realm of defence planning. American and British help trickled in clandestinely to help set up seismic monitoring stations, ostensibly to study earthquakes but with the clear dual use application of monitoring not just

future Indian tests but also further Chinese tests, of which there were seven, starting in 1964, before India's first test.

In an interview to a newspaper, Indian Minister of Scientific and Cultural Affairs Humayun Kabir stated in 1963 that the Chinese invasion had highlighted certain deficiencies in various scientific fields in India. Kabir also announced further governmental measures to induce Indian scientists to return from abroad for employment in India.

As the American Embassy in New Delhi reported back to the State Department in its annual reports on India:

> The Chinese Communist attack last October may have had somewhat the same effect on Indian public interest in research as the first Soviet Sputnik had on the United States. A change in the direction of official thinking on research now seems apparent. As a result of the Emergency greater emphasis is being placed by responsible officials on applied research and on the coordination of research projects carried on by the different branches of Government, in particular the Ministry of Defense and the Department of Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs (through the CSIR).[4]

In the Indian budget for 1963–4, the DAE saw a massive increase in its budget by about 70 per cent. Following the declaration of National Emergency on 24 October 1962, the CSIR was given responsibility for undertaking a number of defence projects in the national laboratories under its jurisdiction. Strategic materials and defence needs were prioritized over other scientific projects, and various collaborative efforts with American universities and institutions were initiated. A series of experiments were conducted with American financial or scientific aid in areas which could best be described as dual use. Research funds for properties of low-temperature solids, energy levels and stability of low and medium weight nuclei, studies on the effects of high altitude on men and materiel, and other aspects of war-making were sanctioned. 'Defence cells' were set up at research institutions across the country, particularly in physics, chemistry, and metallurgy. Dr S. Bhagavantham, Scientific Adviser to the Ministry of Defence, 'stressed the necessity of tying the CSIR laboratories into the national defence effort'.[5] Director S. Hussain Zaheer, Chairman of the CSIR, was put in charge of '(i) identification of scientific problems of defence interest and to suggest necessary action to solve them, (ii) providing technical assistance and know-how to industry to increase production of items of interest to defence, (iii) initiating research and private plant studies of items for which indigenous production is not available and with a view to their commercial production, and (iv) undertaking private plant scale production of such items at the national laboratories.'[6]

Although the Indian government hoped to be self-sufficient in defence matters eventually, they realized the need for immediate foreign technology acquisition. In an article, the *Indian Express* described India's goals succinctly: 'First is immediate build-up of sufficient magnitude to meet a Chinese challenge. Second is long-term build-up to become militarily self-sufficient in order to avoid being left at the mercy of external sources which may hold us to ransom in our dire need.'[7] As part of the efforts, TIFR acquired an advanced computer system for research.

Indian policy was closely informed by scientific advice. The technicalities of scientific cooperation and the direction in which science should progress were beyond most Indian politicians of the time. Most parliamentarians were content to keep the financial tap flowing to scientists who promised to bring to India symbols of power like jet planes and nuclear reactors. As a result, many of the projects India undertook with other states were not the result of a carefully considered political plan but were of scientific and industrial necessity and vision.

India sought developmental aid from both blocs during the Cold War. From the Soviets, India was able to come to an agreement on trading in rupees rather than dollars, which helped considerably with pressure on foreign exchange. The Soviets provided India with heavy machinery and chemicals as did the Eastern bloc. India also concluded an agreement with Poland concerning the peaceful uses of atomic energy and the sharing of information on the subject. The agreement also allowed for scientists to be cross-trained in each of the countries. From Hungary and Czechoslovakia, India procured light weapons, tanks, and other military hardware as well as heavy machine tools. Western war equipment was expensive and came with political or economic conditions India was unwilling to accept.

Indian policy was always that it would try to buy equipment along with the full transfer of technology, barring which it would negotiate to manufacture in-country on licence. It was hoped that Indian industry would be able to absorb the technology and industrial methods by doing so but this dream was short-lived. The command structure of the Indian economy prevented the private sector from receiving the benefits of foreign know-how and government research organizations were unable to learn from their imports. Despite this failure, India's scientific enclave continued to push for transfers of technology and licensing agreements in all arms purchases.

The scientific community was of critical importance at a key juncture in India's public debate on the necessity and value of the nuclear programme. In the immediate aftermath of China's nuclear test in 1964, there was much discussion in India about whether the country could afford a nuclear arms race or even if nuclear weapons did indeed deter an enemy from attacking. Some wondered if nuclear weapons were not beyond the capabilities of a poor country like India in the immediate future. Eight days after the Chinese test, Bhabha made a broadcast on All India Radio (AIR), telling his listeners that nuclear weapons were the cheapest way to give a state deterrent power against a potential enemy. 'A 10 kiloton explosion ... would cost $350,000 or Rs. 17.5 lakhs ... while a two megaton explosion would cost $600,000 or Rs. 30 lakhs. On the other hand, at current prices of TNT, two million tonnes of it would cost some Rs. 150 crore.' Therefore, a stockpile of 50 atomic bombs 'would cost under Rs. 10 crore and a stockpile of fifty two-megaton hydrogen bombs ... Rs. 15 crore'.[8] In 1964, one crore rupee was roughly equivalent to $2.1 million.

An interesting reaction came from the British and US governments—they immediately provided Shastri with alternate calculations that showed the cost of a *single* bomb would be around Rs. 40 crore or Rs. 50 crore, not the Rs. 10 crore Bhabha had envisaged

for *fifty* bombs (Perkovich 2001: 117). This reaction emphasizes the importance modern states, not just India, place on their scientists and their opinions.

While working on the nuclear project, Indian scientists were also working on missile development. In 1963, A. P. J. Abdul Kalam, the future president, then a young scientist at India's Aeronautical Development Establishment, spent four months in training in the United States. He visited NASA's Langley Research Centre in Virginia, where the US Scout rocket was conceived, and the Wallops Island Flight Centre on the Virginia coast, where it was being tested (Milhollin 1989: 31). The United States also helped India build the Thumba Range, training Indian engineers in rocket launching and range operations. In November 1963, the United States launched a sounding rocket from the range, and between then and 1975, more than 350 US, French, Soviet, and British sounding rockets were fired. In 1965, the United States sold to India the technical reports on the Scout's design although it was technically considered classified and came under the Munitions Control List. India's request should have raised some eyebrows: it came from Bhabha. The French had India build some of their rockets under licence, allowing Indian engineers access to rocket design and liquid fuel propulsion technology. Similarly, West German aid flowed to India in the form of vital guidance systems, but that would be much later in the mid-1970s.

In Indian laboratories, research was whipped along as fast as the economy (and India's commitment to social policy and programmes) would allow. Despite a serious financial crunch in 1967, the US embassy reported that India was working on fast breeder reactors and other related technology. The Purnima reactor, for example, served as an excellent laboratory model for studying the behaviour of nuclear weapons, and it is therefore not entirely coincidental that India's atomic scientists were interested in the design. Fast breeder reactors in general have the additional advantage of being more fuel efficient since they produce fuel while burning it. This technology, while it can be argued that it made the best use of India's limited uranium reserves, also served as the technological platform for the Pokhran tests of 1974. Uranium oxide, heavy water, zirconium, and rocket propellant production facilities were also set up in the mid-to-late 1960s. 'Expenditures for the space program are increasing rapidly, but still the total is small', reported American officials in India.[9] Towards the end of the 1960s, Indian nuclear scientists began work on producing material that had clear bomb applications. 'Plutonium production at Trombay is being used for physics and chemistry experiments and also for making plutonium-beryllium neutron sources', reported one official, while another reported the DAE scouting for a site to construct a 200 ton per year plant (of heavy water).[10] All these facilities directly fed the construction and operation of the Purnima reactor, central to Indian bomb-making efforts. American embassy officials astutely observed that 'for the most part, the research is applied solid state physics for the development of components and devices for military, and incidentally for civilian use'.[11] This was duly confirmed by S. Bhagavantham, Scientific Adviser to the Ministry of Defence. In a meeting with the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO), he stated that 'four research areas were being stressed, namely, missiles, electronics, aeronautics, and naval research'.[12]

German delegations, from both East and West, noticed this focus and reported back that Indian scientists, in their collaborative work with foreign teams, were willing to work past the limitations of the agreements into areas of dual use. Indian scientists attended and hosted many conferences on nuclear technology, covering reprocessing of U/Pu fuel elements, fast breeders, enrichment technology, and plutonium chemistry. To most observers, there was no doubt that India was preparing itself for nuclear weapons capability at least by the time of Shastri's death. As the British High Commissioner wrote to London, 'Recent Parliamentary Questions have also established that in Bihar the Department of Atomic Energy is prospecting for uranium, beryllium and columbium-tantalum .... while the Government is determined to develop atomic energy only for peaceful purposes, defence needs would remain foremost in their minds.'[13]

Theory usually parts company with practice, and that adage applies also in India. While the political scene was abuzz with developments that would have far-reaching consequences for Indian foreign policy, and science and industry were galvanized into serving the nation, they did so at their own pace despite what politicians and planners wanted. The AEC was no different. On top of all the difficulties India's scientific institutions experienced in the 1950s with international controls on technology and recruiting of skilled labour, internal politics still plagued the scientific estate and lowered its output. Blackett's (1967) critique that there was a large gap in India between idea, implementation, and action still held true. Any flow of information between politicians, the military, and scientists happened informally through individuals and their networks, not out of an 'articulate interaction of structure and organisation' (Anderson 2010: 212).

Working conditions for scientists at India's scientific institutions remained modest at best throughout the 1950s and 1960s. The suicide of scientist D. Parthasarathy in August 1960 due to obstacles to professional development drew attention from the Prime Minister's Office and the Scientific Advisory Committee to the Cabinet (SACC). Notorious delays in promotions and recruitment plagued India's research organizations. Bureaucratic difficulties in even getting passports, visas, and access to foreign currency when studying abroad were pandemic. Promotions were governed by a strict quota of 5 per cent annually until the late 1960s. Governmental regulations, such as the prohibition of more than one individual visiting the same international conference and governmental control over which foreign collaborations and projects were acceptable hampered the free discourse of science. Scientists were not even allowed to freely move from one government research organization to another (Anderson 2010: 258). The Indian culture of equating seniority with merit was not a recipe for success in the sciences either. Critically, all scientific facilities were overseen by the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), professional bureaucrats, rather than by other scientists. The flexibility scientists demanded went against the IAS organizational ethos and in the ensuing chaos productivity was impaired.

The SACC attempted to redress these grievances but was opposed tooth and nail by the Union Public Services Commission (UPSC), a constitutional body authorized to staff the various civil services in India. Other than mobility and remuneration, the SACC fought for the exemption of research establishments from India's Reservation Orders for Scheduled Castes and Tribes. Under the law, socially backward groups were reserved a

quota of positions in all government agencies, regardless of merit. The SACC insisted that merit be the only criterion when hiring or promoting in the scientific field. The war with China strengthened the SACC's case. Stating the obvious to the seemingly oblivious, S. Bhagavantham, the new director of the DRDO, pointed out, 'We cannot separate scientific output into watertight compartments, separating defence labs from universities and civilian labs' (Anderson 2010: 285). In this new climate of urgency, defence research became almost synonymous with science research and mobility became easier for scientists volunteering to move to the DRDO. The SACC also suggested key projects such as microwave engineering which found immediate funding. Although the war ameliorated some of the conditions at India's research and development (R&D) hubs, problems still lingered. J. B. S. Haldane, a biologist, complained that 'scientific talent dries up at age 35 because the scientist is overwhelmed with administrative work' (Anderson 2010: 266). Mathematician K. Chandrasekharan noted that Indian scientists seemed better at learning and replicating than doing creative work. Satyen Bose, the famous physicist, lamented that Indian scientists needed to focus more on quality than quantity of work produced, and P. C. Mahalanobis, a renowned applied statistician, remarked that the lack of a public sphere in which scientists could freely discuss ideas and collaborate also weakened India's scientific enterprise.

The period from 1962 until 1974 saw the Indian scientific enclave at the height of its foreign engagements; the border war with China had accelerated efforts across all defence fields to achieve the means to defend India against foreign aggression and the post-1974 period was marked by sanctions in the aftermath of the Pokhran nuclear test. While scientists continued to inform foreign policy after Pokhran, the twelve years preceding 1974 saw scientists at their most influential. India engaged with several countries in dozens of areas, from nuclear energy and nuclear applications to food, medicine, and textiles, to mining, metallurgy, navigation, communications, and ballistics. A scientific representative was usually attached to every Indian negotiating team to advise on technical matters. Despite all sorts of economic obstacles, there appeared to be, within limits, a 'free [flow of] foreign exchange for GOI defence purchases'.[14]

Perhaps the most visible effect of India's scientists on foreign policy has been in the realm of nuclear non-proliferation. The Atoms for Peace initiative, originally intended to attract countries into the US orbit with the lure of nuclear technology and away from the Soviet Union, was followed by the Gilpatric Report in 1965. In what is known as the 'n^{th} country problem', the report highlighted the threat to US national security if more countries, even allies, were to possess nuclear weapons—the more states with nuclear weapons, the greater the instability and unpredictability in a crisis, and the more US 'diplomatic and military influence would wane'.[15] The Gilpatric Report radically altered the US approach to the sale of nuclear technology and it began to insist on bilateral safeguards that would be upheld by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee (ENDC), which was tasked with drafting a treaty to curb the spread of nuclear weapons, served as the backdrop of what India saw as a failed Limited Test Ban Treaty (LTBT). The LTBT had sought to make nuclear testing more difficult by banning atmospheric nuclear detonations but China

refused to sign the treaty and the Soviet Union and the United States embarked upon an underground nuclear testing programme that, between them, conducted over 350 tests before the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) would come into force. India's position at the ENDC asked for a security guarantee for all non-nuclear countries ostensibly from all nuclear powers but in actuality from the United States and the Soviet Union, a framework within which existing nuclear powers would abjure their stockpiles, and avenues of research for peaceful nuclear explosives. This stance addressed its security concerns vis-à-vis China while simultaneously allowing it to continue to work on the Holy Grail of modern science—nuclear technology.

A little-known fact about the ENDC discussions is that the then Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was ready to accede to the NPT in November 1967 but changed her mind at the last minute (Kapur 1976: 196). It is tempting to think that policy decisions are made via rational and objective analyses and that the Prime Minister changed her mind at the urging of her scientific advisers but the fact is that almost everyone in India, from the overwhelming majority in Indira Gandhi's Cabinet to the public, was against the NPT and in favour of a nuclear weapons programme even if they did not fully understand what that entailed. Nine months later India refused to sign the NPT, arguing that it only created a situation of atomic apartheid and prohibited horizontal nuclear proliferation while having no consequences for vertical proliferation.

There are, no doubt, political and strategic reasons behind why India conducted a nuclear test in 1974 and continued to develop a nuclear arsenal. Nonetheless, there was also a scientific momentum behind the test. As scientists mastered various aspects of the nuclear fuel cycle, gained greater knowledge about transuranic chemistry, and developed better models of neutron behaviour in fast-changing environments, there emerged also a desire to test the bomb, if only out of scientific curiosity. This is not to argue that scientists did not understand the international implications of such behaviour—as those at the forefront of India's international technical cooperation, they did—but the psychological need to snub the Western-led technology denial regime as well as to prove their own worth argued in favour of a nuclear test. This desire may have played a very small role in Indira Gandhi's decision-making but it informed the advice Indian scientists were giving their political masters. The most poignant demonstration of this is that soon after the successful detonation of India's 'peaceful' nuclear explosion, Raja Ramanna, one of the main scientists who had carried out the test, approached the Prime Minister and asked for permission to begin work on the hydrogen bomb. This was the modernist imperative of nuclear physics.

After Pokhran, 1974–Present Day

In 1995, the NPT came up for review and extension. India did not feel that any progress had been made on the concerns it had expressed nearly 30 years earlier and its position remained the same. It is not easy to ascertain how much influence scientists had over

this decision, for the need to save political face may have determined India's stance until a willingness to compromise was first seen from the other side. However, a few scientists wrote columns in India's major newspapers explaining their position to the new generation of the public. In this sense, the respect given to scientists in India allows them to at least play a not insignificant role in public diplomacy.

The announcement in 2005 of the Indo-US nuclear negotiations aimed at achieving a breakthrough agreement covering active nuclear cooperation between the two countries again saw Indian scientists in a prominent role in decision-making. Those in favour of and those against the deal both sought the assistance of scientists to sell their case. Interestingly, while the expert opinions of scientists have lost weight with the political class (except in public diplomacy), they have gained currency with the public who have wearied of India's corrupt politicians and inefficient bureaucracy. What the scientific enclave has lost in terms of patrons like Nehru, it has gained in the admiration of a public better informed that it was at the time of independence.

Envoi

Paradoxically, given its successes against tremendous odds in the past, today the future of Indian science looks bleak. The top-down approach Nehru had taken upon independence worked only in creating an institutional framework for higher education. However, neglect of primary and secondary education, low education budgets, tightly controlled syllabi, and an academic environment that depends upon learning by rote rather than on kindling curiosity has gradually turned off the tap on new talent. Indian universities do little research and few journals of repute are published in India. Fewer students opt to study science and cheating is rampant in the classrooms. This unfriendly environment has led to a debilitating brain drain of bright Indian minds to Western research centres. Urgent reforms are needed in the education system as well as the scientific bureaucracy if a significant quantity of high-quality scientists is to be produced.

In 1947, amidst the excitement of a new beginning, a naïvety existed arising from inexperience in running vast bureaucracies in countries with complex societies. There already existed a pool, albeit small, of willing, excellent minds who had trained under some of the luminaries of the generation nationally and in major centres of scientific research abroad disposed to work for a cause greater than their own enrichment. Those advantages in recruitment have now been replaced by decades of underachievement, red tape, poor remuneration, and corruption. Ironically, despite these material disadvantages, scientists enjoy a fairly high social standing in Indian society and names like A. P. J. Kalam or Tessy Thomas find their place right up beside sports and entertainment icons of the day, in effect rock stars for India's youth.

It is impossible to separate high science from the modern state. The enormous expense and unsure returns on research make the state the only possible patron of consequence. While multinational companies with budgets comparable to a small state have

risen in recent years, they are not entirely free to trade in certain items. The monopoly over violence that a state enjoys gives it the other quality that a patron of modern science must have. In India, the years soon after independence benefited from a Prime Minister who was particularly sympathetic to science and technology. Nehru's re-imagination of India as a modern land of reason gave scientists a prominent position in national affairs.

However, as is wont with any developing state, particularly if economic growth and social indicators do not improve at a brisk pace, later generations of Indian leaders became more preoccupied with quotidian tasks such as maintaining the institutions of the state and holding fissiparous factions together. High science slid into the background during these later administrations, particularly as the Indian footprint in international affairs began to shrink.

The liberalization of the Indian economy in 1991 and the country's rise since then has again put India on the international radar right at a time when an era of physics seems ready to give way to a new era of biology. Important questions that define and shape the field will undoubtedly arise. One wonders if the much stronger Rising India is as ready to face those challenges as was impoverished but visionary Independent India some 70 years ago.

Notes

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CHAPTER 24

THE ECONOMIC IMPERATIVES SHAPING INDIAN FOREIGN POLICY

SANJAYA BARU

From its inception Indian foreign policy was shaped by two, not necessarily competing though potentially contradictory, imperatives. On the one hand, the political leadership's requirement to address free India's developmental needs and aspirations and, on the other hand, democratic India's urge to continue to inspire anti-colonial and liberation struggles and play a leadership role within the developing world.

As a predominantly agrarian society with mass poverty, desperate to industrialize and widen employment opportunities, India was required to build bridges with economies that had the capital surplus and the modern technology it needed, both in manufacturing and agriculture. As a nation that had inspired anti-colonial movements and liberation struggles in Asia and Africa, through the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, India could not have but extended its solidarity to new nations in the making.

Clearly, the challenge for the architects of Indian foreign policy was to combine the 'idealism' of a new post-colonial democratic republic with the 'realism' needed to address a backward economy's developmental needs. Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister, a thinker, a writer and a nation builder, immediately grasped the nature of this dilemma. Addressing the Constituent Assembly months after India's independence, on December 4, 1947,[1] Nehru said:

> Talking about foreign policies, the House must remember that these are not empty struggles on a chess board. Behind them lie all manner of things. Ultimately, foreign policy is the outcome of economic policy ...
>
> Whatever policy you may lay down, the art of conducting the foreign affairs of a country lies in finding out what is most advantageous to the country. (Baru 2007: 455, 459)

> Therefore whether a country is imperialistic or socialist or communist, its Foreign Minister thinks primarily of the interests of that country. (Baru 2007: 460)

While India did often walk the high road of universal principles in defending its foreign policy, every now and then it has had to come to terms with the compulsions of the low road of interests in defining it (Baru 2007: ch. 2). Even as India stayed away from Cold War military alliances it did not shy away from reaching out to the United States and to the Soviet Union, from time to time, for economic and military assistance. I have argued elsewhere that economic performance and capability are a necessary, though by no means sufficient, foundation of political and diplomatic influence and military power (Baru 2007: ch. 1). India's priority at the time was to build such economic capability.

The 'implosion' of the Soviet Union under the burden of its economic failure, and the rise of China as a major power on the back of rapid economic growth stand testimony to the vital importance of economic capacity and capability of a state. It is not economic growth in itself, to be sure, but the nature of the growth process that holds the key to a country's global profile and power, its strategic role and relevance. By 'nature' we mean the distributional aspects of growth, the impact of growth on human capabilities and skills, on global competitiveness and the sectoral composition of that growth, that is the extent of industrialization, and its fiscal sustainability.

The fiscal sustainability of growth has become increasingly important as nations find their resources stretched. Governments need finances both for diplomacy and defense. To the extent that the effectiveness of a country's foreign policy is shaped by its defense capability the links between fiscal capacity, defense capability, and international relations are manifest. No country can project power nor extend influence externally if it is internally fiscally stressed.

Planning and Foreign Relations

Aware of these links between India's domestic capability and its external profile, between its economic capacity and national aspirations, Nehru emphasized the strategic importance of economic development. This at a time when both the national movement and domestic business interests shaped a worldview in which India sought to minimize its external dependence in rebuilding its economy. This attitude influenced Indian thinking about foreign direct investment and foreign trade. India's First Five-Year Plan put it pithily:

> That a plan of development today must, in the main, rely on domestic resources can hardly be over-emphasized. In the first place, the conditions governing international investment are no longer what they were when some of the highly industrialized countries of today like the United States, Australia and Canada began their career of development. Secondly, external assistance is acceptable only if it carries with it no

> conditions explicit or implicit, which might affect even remotely the country's ability to take an independent line in international affairs.[2]

The link between an independent foreign policy and national economic development was directly drawn. This also reflected the thinking and the interests of Indian business leaders. As the authors of a plan for post-independence economic development, popularly named the 'Bombay Plan', India's top industrialists including J. R. D. Tata, G. D. Birla, Lala Shriram, and Purshothamdas Thakurdas, invited the government to step in and fill the investment gap rather than allow foreign direct investment (FDI) to do so (Thakurdas et al. 1945).

The Bombay Plan preferred drawing on foreign savings through external loans and aid rather than FDI. The First Five-Year Plan's preference for aid over investment reflected this bias. It was a bias that was reversed in 1991, as we shall show later, when India opted for FDI and trade to bring in foreign exchange resources over loans and aid. The First Five-Year Plan did recognize that even aid can come with conditions that may not serve the national interest, but opted for it as the best of a bad bargain. In the words of the Plan document:

> There are also obvious risks in excessive reliance on foreign aid which depends on the domestic political situation in lending countries and which might be interrupted by any untoward international developments. And yet, external resources at strategic points and stages can be of so much assistance in a period of rapid development that it is desirable, consistently with other objectives, to create conditions favourable to their inflow.[3]

Even in Nehru's time, there was a dichotomy between how Indian diplomats and the architects of Indian foreign policy viewed the world and how its economic planners and the managers of fiscal aspects did. The thinking within the foreign and strategic policy establishment was greatly influenced by the 'idealist' strand in Nehru's thinking, seeking a larger international role for India commensurate with its standing as a leading post-colonial democracy inspired by the idea of the solidarity of developing countries, especially the post-colonial nations of Asia and Africa. On the other hand, the thinking on external economic policy was shaped by another set of Nehru's disciples who were 'realists' in their appreciation of India's capabilities and needs. Their view was further bolstered by the pragmatism of 'non-Nehruvian' economic policy-makers like John Mathai, Morarji Desai, and T. T. Krishnamachari.[4]

Thus, even as India offered encouragement to anti-imperialist struggles in Asia and Africa, Nehru's government was pragmatic enough to recognize the importance of attracting foreign investment and maintaining good relations with the rising developed economies of the time, especially the United States. In October 1949, Nehru undertook a major tour of the United States partly with a view to attracting American private sector investment into India. Before embarking on the trip his government issued a policy statement, in April 1949, that assured equal treatment to domestic and foreign business

(Kidron 1965). Even though the United States was more focused at the time on post-war reconstruction in Western Europe and East Asia and had little interest in India's development, and despite limited US interest in India at the time, Indian communists chastised Nehru for keeping India under the 'American shadow' (Natarajan 1952).

The foreign exchange crisis of 1957–8, dubbed the 'sterling crisis' due to the sharp and speedy decline in India's sterling reserves in the post-Korean War period, forced the Government of India to adopt more inward-oriented economic policies aimed at conserving foreign exchange. These policies, quite naturally, also had protectionist consequences. India's neglect of foreign trade reflected both the 'export-pessimism' of its policy-makers and the inward-orientation of its industrialists. Even though the Indian subcontinent was at the crossroads of pan-Asian trade for centuries before the arrival of European traders in the Indian Ocean, India's national movement was greatly influenced by its more recent historical experience wherein trade was viewed as 'exploitative' and 'enforced' rather than as beneficial to development and growth.[5]

Thus, even as India's share of world trade declined from 2.0 per cent in 1950 to 0.5 per cent by 1980, its share of both bilateral and multilateral aid increased significantly, with India emerging as a major beneficiary of such assistance. In the 1960s and 1970s India's share of total official development assistance (ODA) was 10 per cent, with South Asia as a whole receiving as much as the whole of Africa in ODA. In the period 1960–2003 India was the third largest recipient of US aid, next only to Israel and Egypt (Gupta et al. 2006).

The critical importance of foreign aid and its influence on foreign policy was brought home to the Indian political leadership in the mid-to-late 1960s when India faced an acute food shortage, following failed monsoons in 1965–6 and an acute shortage of foreign exchange after the war with Pakistan. India led what was popularly called a 'ship-to-mouth' existence, dependent on food imports from the United States. In exchange for offering this assistance, the United States expected India to open up its economy and devalue the Indian rupee. At the same time, the United States stepped forward to assist India's Green Revolution program that aimed to reduce India's dependence on imported food. Each of these economic options and paths had important foreign policy consequences for India, shaping its bilateral and multilateral relations.

This phase of economic development, characterized by 'state capitalism'—that is, public investment creating the foundations for private sector development—mirrored in a way Indian foreign policy that sought to maintain a balance in India's relations between the capitalist West and the socialist East (Bettelheim 1971).

Non-Alignment and Mixed Economy

The realist view of the policy of non-alignment would suggest that it was aimed at making use of Cold War divisions, steering clear of military alliances but securing aid from both the United States and the USSR. The Polish macroeconomist Michal

Kalecki ([1964] 1993) captured this aspect of Indian policy of non-alignment well in the metaphor of the 'clever calf that sucks two cows' (p. 10). While US aid was focused on agriculture, Soviet aid went into the creation of public sector industry and defense manufacturing. World Bank aid, which was also US aid, in a manner of speaking, went into irrigation and power.

In other words, non-alignment was no strategy, much less a 'grand strategy' or 'high principle'. It was a clever self-serving tactic responding to India's developmental needs and political compulsions. As a non-aligned country India utilized the strategic autonomy available to it to promote national industrial development, facilitating the rise of national business. The public sector became the foundation for the growth of an indigenous private sector.

While India's private sector remained open to greater engagement with the United States, the government built public sector capacities with the help of the Soviets. Thus, a tactical policy of non-alignment facilitated the emergence of a mixed economy and the rise of the state sector strengthened the economic relationship between India and the Soviet Union. While India often took positions at variance with developed countries in the United Nations and within the Non-Aligned Movement, on the boards of international financial institutions (IFIs), dominated by the United States and Western Europe, Indian officials remained pragmatic, always aware of the fact that as a potential borrower India needed the support of the IFIs and their key shareholders.

As a 'founding member' of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank India felt entitled to draw funds from both. The 1967 devaluation, when India felt the United States was not supportive enough, strained the relationship between the Indian government and the 'Bretton Woods sisters'. Within a few years, India had entered into a formal alliance with the Soviet Union, advocated a new international economic order, cemented a new relationship with the Non-Aligned Movement, and a more intensive involvement within the G-77 and other developing country forums, and stepped up its criticism of the Bretton Woods institutions, specifically insofar as they favored conservative macroeconomic policies that were aimed at encouraging debtor nations to reduce fiscal and budget deficits, privatize public enterprises, liberalize external trade, and open up capital markets to external flows.

It was only after the 1967–9 experience, and in the wake of India's strategic alliance with the Soviet Union, in the 1969–77 period, that India became wary of approaching the US-dominated IMF. India returned to the Fund for assistance only in 1981 after Indira Gandhi's return to power. Indira Gandhi's nuanced position on the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, which India did not endorse, and her meeting with US President Ronald Reagan at Cancun, Mexico, in October 1981 were indicative of a softening of her view of the United States and of 'US-led institutions'.

However, in response to a renewed political attack against her by the Left Front, which targeted her decision to seek IMF assistance, she opted to give up the last installment of the loan and pre-pay the loan, making it a symbol of her independence of action (Patel 2002: ch. 7). The 1981 episode is instructive. India's application for IMF lending met with initial resistance from the United States. India's case was presented starkly by

her executive director on the IMF board, M. Narasimham, who told his US counterpart that if the United States blocked IMF support India would have no option but to turn to the Soviet Union for financial assistance. The United States chose to abstain on the vote in the IMF board thereby enabling India to get access to IMF support, while at the same time expressing its disapproval of Indian policies at the time by not actually voting in favor of the loan application. This was probably the last time that India could, to deploy Kalecki's ([1964] 1993) metaphor, try to 'suck two cows', bargaining with the Cold War rivals to get what it wanted.

The late 1970s and the 1980s was also a period of transition in the development of Indian capitalism. As the economies of East and South-East Asia began to industrialize and grow, Indian business became wary of the 'socialism' of the political class, on the one hand, and critical of the inefficiency of 'state capitalism' on the other. Indian business wanted to take advantage of global opportunities, enter into joint ventures with multinational companies, and secure access to technology. Even as the government banned Coca-Cola and forced IBM to shut up shop, Indian business went around the world in search of capital, technology, and markets.

As the Indian economy became more private sector oriented, more open to foreign investment, more dependent on foreign trade, and as India's key 'socialist' ally, the Soviet Union, imploded, Indian foreign policy too began to reorient itself. Both Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi reached out to the United States. Rajiv sought to mend fences with China, which too was now pursuing a more pragmatic economic and foreign policy. The gradual shifts in India's economic orientation in the 1980s began to reflect themselves in similarly gradual shifts in foreign policy, culminating in the Indian decision to permit the over-flight of US air force planes over Indian territory during the first Gulf War in 1990.

The Post-Cold War/ Post-Liberalization Era

It was not a mere coincidence that India faced its worst external economic crisis just around the time its strategic ally was on the verge of disappearing. The implosion of the Soviet Union, the popular uprising in Eastern Europe, and the end of the Cold War ran parallel to a sharp deterioration in India's economic performance. The balance of payments crisis of 1990–1 was triggered in part by shifts in the global balance of power and the refusal of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) economies to help India tide over a payments crisis until it undertook major structural economic reforms, and perhaps a rethinking of its foreign policy.

Thus, the new turn in India's economic policies was in part a consequence of a shift in India's foreign policy priorities. First, India reached out to the United States, by nuancing its views on the situation in Afghanistan and during the Iraq–Kuwait crisis of 1990–1

seeking to mollify the United States. Second, India stopped viewing the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) as a pro-US cabal and shifted to treating its South-East Asian neighbors as important economic partners. Prime Minister Narasimha Rao launched a new 'Look East Policy' aimed at reviving India's longstanding economic and people-to-people links with the region. Third, India extended diplomatic recognition to Israel which has, over time, become an important defense and strategic partner of this country. Fourth, in opening up the economy to foreign trade and investment, India reached out to both developed economies, especially the United States, Japan, and the European Union, and to developing economies, especially its immediate neighbors.[6] For the first time, India placed its economic growth and development at the center of its neighborhood policy by suggesting that the rise of India as an economic power would benefit its South Asian neighbors. While the seed of this idea is to be found in Narasimha Rao's approach to Pakistan, Bangladesh, and other neighbors, Prime Minister I. K. Gujral enthusiastically promoted the idea as the 'Gujral Doctrine' later in the 1990s (Baru 2007: 125).

The link between the new turn in economic policies and foreign policy was directly established by Prime Minister Narasimha Rao when he told a news magazine in 1992, 'Now the Cold War is over. There is an element of cooperation instead of confrontation. It is a new situation. And we have to respond to that also. So certain policy reorientations will take place to ensure that our national interest does not suffer.'[7]

Several factors contributed to this shift in Indian thinking on relations with the world and the role of economic and business interests in international relations (Baru 2008).

First, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the consequent disruption of an important external trade relationship. In 1989 the Soviet Union accounted for 16 per cent of India's foreign trade. By 1992 this share was down to 2.0 per cent. Soon thereafter, Russia began to demand an end to the rupee–rouble bilateral trading arrangement and wanted trade payments settled in US dollars. This at a time when India was still feeling the pressure of low foreign exchange reserves.

Second, the balance of payments crisis of 1990–1 forced India to reach out to the United States, Japan, and the European Union and adopt a stabilization and adjustment program to secure financial support from the IMF and the World Bank. All three demanded major changes in Indian economic policy, with a focus on greater openness to foreign trade and investment, in exchange for extending support.

Third, as a consequence of the balance of payments crisis, as a result of new thinking within the policy-making establishment, and thanks to new trends in remittance inflows and foreign trade, India chose to move away from external aid and debt as major sources of balance of payments support and opt for foreign trade, especially services trade, and investment, especially portfolio flows, as sources of foreign exchange.

Fourth, the 1990s saw a major change in India's approach to foreign trade in general and to a multilateral trade regime in particular. India changed its stance in 1992, departing from its earlier opposition to the launch of the Uruguay Round of trade negotiations under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) to become a founding member of the World Trade Organization (WTO). India agreed to bring the services

sector under WTO purview, but has insisted that the 'movement of natural persons' be governed by multilateral trading rules. India's 'Look East' policy and its interest in increasing its economic interaction with the Indian Ocean Rim countries also shaped India's relations with its wider 'Southern Asian' neighborhood. India sought regional and bilateral trade agreements on a parallel track and supported the idea of a South Asian Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA), and negotiated free trade agreements (FTA) with ASEAN and a range of countries including South Korea, Israel, and the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

Fifth, China's rise as an open economy and a trading nation had a profound impact on political and academic thinking within India and influenced public policy both with respect to domestic and external economic policy and with respect to India's foreign and strategic policy, by drawing attention to the importance of economic openness and interdependence in international relations.

Sixth, as the 1990s progressed, and more in the first few years of the new century, India discovered its global prowess in the field of information technology. The business generated by the so-called 'Y2K' problem followed by the growth of Indian information technology (IT) and IT-enabled services business, the 'software and outsourcing' boom, and the growth in trade in services greatly changed attitudes towards globalization and global integration, in particular in relation to the United States.[8]

Seventh, the outward-orientation of Indian business has increased with an easing of regulations on capital inflows and outflows. The emergence of a new class of 'Forbes Billionaires' in sectors with global markets, like IT, telecom, and pharmaceuticals, shaped the attitudes of a new generation of Indian enterprise, altering the attitude of Indian business to globalization. The acquisition of firms in OECD economies and increased South–South trade and investment flows have increased the stake of Indian business in improving India's relations with these countries.

Finally, the increased outward-orientation of Indian business has made business organizations such as the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) active, if not proactive, players in diplomacy. Both FICCI and CII have been engaged in trade and economic diplomacy, working closely with Indian and foreign governments. They are yet to play an independent role of influencing government action. Rather, they function as extensions of the government, acting as facilitators and enablers of diplomacy more than as 'demanders' and initiators of policy. Indian diplomats, traditionally averse to dealing with private business, do increasingly devote time to trade, corporate and related issues. Nowhere was the helpful role of business in the conduct of foreign policy more evident than in the bringing to fruition of the India-US civil nuclear energy cooperation agreement (Baru 2009).

A change of government, with the ostensibly more 'ideologically' driven Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) coming to power in 1998, did not alter the realist principles guiding post-Cold War foreign policy. In an assertion of realism Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee chose to conduct nuclear weapons tests, declare India a nuclear weapons power, and then, unilaterally, imposed a moratorium on further testing while adopting a

'no first use' doctrine. While the United States, Japan, and some other countries imposed sanctions on India after the tests were conducted, Vajpayee's pragmatic follow-up decisions, including the moratorium, the doctrine, and the diplomacy, blunted the edge of sanctions. His government then pushed for greater economic opening up to build new bridges of interdependence both with major powers and with India's neighbors. It was Vajpayee who gave concrete shape to the so-called Gujral Doctrine by signing the India–Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement in 1998 (Baru 2007: chs. 1–7).

By the turn of the century the idea that economic interdependence can improve relations between countries had come to influence thinking on Indian foreign policy. The successful opening up of the Indian economy in the 1990s, with the economy's growth rate rising as the share of trade in national income rose, imparted a strategic edge to India's trade policies.

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh captured this best in his reply to Sonia Gandhi when she cautioned him against the India–ASEAN FTA in 2006. 'Our approach to regional trade agreements, in general, and FTAs, in particular', he told her, 'has been evolved after careful consideration of our geo-political as well as economic interests. Although India has a large domestic market, our experience with earlier relatively insular policies, as also the global experience in this regard, clearly bring out the growth potential of trade and economic cooperation with the global economy.'[9] Pragmatism is writ large on India's post-Cold War foreign policy. Almost all bilateral relationships, regional associations, and multilateral priorities are now defined by India's primary concern of ensuring sustained and rapid economic development and maintaining its national security.

Economic Interdependence and International Relations

From 1950 to 1980 the Indian economy grew at around 3.5 per cent per year. This was the era of inward-oriented development, when India's share of world trade remained at around 0.5 per cent, compared to the 2.0 per cent share it had at the time of independence. Foreign investment inflows were minimal and India depended almost entirely on aid and debt flows to meet its foreign exchange requirements. From 1980 to 2000 the Indian economy grew at the rate of around 5.5 per cent. This acceleration of growth was associated both with a rise in domestic savings and investment rates and with an increase in the share of trade in India's national income. After 2000, and until the transatlantic financial crisis began in 2008 and produced the global economic slowdown which impacted India, the economy grew at an average rate of 7.5 per cent per year, maintaining an all-time high rate of close to 9.0 per cent per year in 2003–8. This acceleration of growth and the rise in India's share of world trade, to around 1.5 per cent by the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, shaped Indian external economic and foreign policy. India concluded a series of FTAs and further opened up its economy to FDI.

Five elements have come to define Indian foreign policy during this phase of greater outward-orientation of the economy (Baru 2014: ch. 9).

First, the single most important objective of Indian foreign policy has come to be defined as the 'creation a global environment conducive to her economic development and the well-being of the people of India'.

Second, the idea that India would benefit from greater integration with the world economy and that India should be more closely integrated with other Asian economies as an active member of a future Asian Economic Community. India began to recognize the benefits of economic interdependence when it saw a country like South Korea refuse to impose sanctions on it in the wake of the Pokhran tests and, on the other hand, signaled unhappiness with Scandinavian countries that did impose sanctions by cutting off their aid programs.

Third, India's relations with major powers, especially the United States, have increasingly been shaped by economic factors, including a concern for energy security and access to high technology.

Fourth, greater regional cooperation and integration, through better connectivity, in South Asia is viewed as a win-win proposition for all countries, restoring to the subcontinent the status of being the 'crossroads' of Asia.

Fifth, India's experiment of pursuing economic development within the framework of a plural, secular, and liberal democracy is seen to have a global relevance, redefining relations with many countries. As the Prime Minister put it:

> Economists quantify our engagement with the world in terms of our share of world trade and capital flows; strategic analysts look at military and political alliances. I submit to you for your consideration the idea that the most enduring engagement of a people with the world is in the realm of ideas and the idea we must engage the world through is the 'idea of India'—the idea of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*. The idea that even as nations may clash, cultures and civilizations can co-exist.[10]

Launching the *Indian Foreign Affairs Journal*, a journal of the Association of Indian Diplomats, in February 2006, Manmohan Singh captured the essence of this approach to foreign policy when he said:

> As we strive to realize our due place in the comity of Nations, any policy must stand the test of one simple question: *how will it affect our quest for development and our need to provide a secure environment for government to deliver to our people.* For this, it goes without saying that the realization of our goal lies in widening, deepening and expanding our interaction with all our economic partners, with all our neighbours, with all Major Powers.[11]

This perspective has increasingly come to define mainstream thinking on foreign policy priorities. In the run-up to the national elections the leader of the BJP, who hopes to be India's next Prime Minister, emphasized that improved trade and economic relations, especially with India's neighbors, would be the focus of his government's foreign policy.[12] Schaffer and Schaffer conclude in an essay on Modi's foreign

policy: 'The most important message in Modi's October speech was the centrality of economics in his thinking about foreign policy.'[13] As chief minister of the state of Gujarat, Modi traveled to Singapore, Japan, and China in search of investment and has said that state governments should play a larger role in defining foreign policy priorities.

Conclusion

Even though Nehru recognized early the economic underpinnings of foreign policy, as long as the Indian economy was inward-oriented and grew slowly, placing limited demands on the global economy and on its own neighborhood, the economy imposed fewer constraints on foreign policy options. Moreover, India's global appeal as a post-colonial democracy with a secular constitution was larger than the economic opportunity it was willing to and capable of offering the world. Thus India could rally the developing world against neocolonialism and seek a 'new international economic order' in the place of the one designed and dominated by the West.

As the economy grew bigger and more open, the benefits and the imperatives of global interdependence came to shape India's relations with the world. Economic, in particular business, interests became more pronounced in defining its relations with the world. Rather than campaign against the global order, India began to demand a role in the rule-making processes. On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the Bandung Conference, where newly independent Asian and African nations gathered to unite against the existing world order, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh told the Africa Asia Conference in Indonesia, in 2005: 'At the global level, we must devise instrumentalities to deal with imbalances built into the functioning of the international political and economic order. We should aim to expand the constituency that supports the processes of globalization.'

India's decision to shift away from aid and debt dependence to trade and investment changed the nature of its interaction with the world and the choice of partners. Like many other Asian economies, India too embraced globalization and a more interdependent world, worrying, however, that a crisis-ridden West may now be becoming more protectionist and insular.

While external dependence on energy has defined the foreign and strategic policy of many countries, including India, an additional element that India became increasingly conscious of in articulating its foreign policy was the economic clout of, for want of a better word, the Indian diaspora—both people of Indian origin (PIOs) and non-resident Indians (NRIs).

Nowhere has this role of people-to-people interaction, involving the economic interests of PIOs and NRIs been more evident than in India's relations with the United States and the countries of the Gulf. Thus, people-to-people (P2P) and business-to-business

(B2B) interests have come to define India's foreign policy priorities. This is now widely recognized and acknowledged by India's policy-makers.[14]

Acknowledgments

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Notes

1. Jawaharlal Nehru, 'Address to the Constituent Assembly', December 4, 1947. Reprinted as Appendix in Baru (2007: 453–64).
2. India, Planning Commission, *First Five Year Plan*, 1952. Government of India. Accessed at <http://planningcommission.nic.in/plans/planrel/fiveyr/index1.html>.
3. Planning Commission, *First Five Year Plan*, 'Introduction'.
4. For an elaboration of this theme see Baru (2013).
5. For a classic left-wing statement of this view see Chandra (1966). For a liberal academic presentation of both sides of the debate see Kumar et al. (1982).
6. For a detailed discussion of the influence of economic policy changes on post-Cold War Indian foreign policy see Kim (2006).
7. Narasimha Rao, P.V. quoted in *Sunday* magazine, September 29, 1991.
8. On the role of the IT sector in promoting India–US relations see Baru (2007: ch. 37).
9. Prime Minister's Letter to UPA Chairperson, April 20, 2006. See 'Manmohan allays Sonia's FTA concerns', *Indian Express*, May 8, 2006.
10. Manmohan Singh, *Hindustan Times Summit*, November 5, 2004. Accessed at: <http://pmindia.nic.in/speech-details.php?nodeid=37>. Raja Mohan (2005) clubbed these ideas together and dubbed them the 'Manmohan Singh Doctrine'.
11. Manmohan Singh, Address to the Association of Indian Diplomats, February 15, 2006. <http://www.pmindia.nic.in>.
12. 'Trade to be a big part of Modi's foreign policy—BJP', *Hindustan Times*, April 27, 2014. Accessed at: <http://www.hindustantimes.com/elections2014/election-beat/bjp-says-trade-to-be-big-part-of-modi-s-foreign-policy-pak-wary/article1-1212656.aspx>.
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14. Manmohan Singh: 'In today's economically integrated world, economic relationships are the bedrock on which social, cultural and political relationships are built. A strategic relationship that is not underpinned by a strong economic relationship is unlikely to prosper. On the other hand, a web of economic relationships intensifies both business-to-business and people to people contacts, promoting a deeper and better understanding between countries.' Address to US–India Business Council, Washington, DC, November 23, 2009. Accessed at: <http://pmindia.nic.in/speech-details.php?nodeid=818>.

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PART IV

GEOGRAPHY

CHAPTER 25

INDIA AND THE REGION

STEPHEN P. COHEN

VIRTUALLY all names of world regions are reified, that is, the terms used to describe a particular territory invariably carry with them competing meanings. Thus, just about every toponym used to describe India and its neighbors carries different normative implications. 'Aryavarta'—land of the Aryans—was part of the traditional Hindu description, 'India' was the name the Greeks used for the peoples who resided near the River Indus, and 'Indian subcontinent', was once a shorthand, but downplayed India's neighbors. Pakistanis call their neighbor Hindustan in contrast with their own state. *Subcontinent* is archaic, but perhaps more inclusive. 'The Raj' is both inaccurate and obsolete, reflecting British political and military hegemony.

The term 'South Asia' is of very recent origin—it came into use in the mid-1960s. The School of International Studies at Sapru House had a South-Southeast, and Southwest Asia program, and Professor S. D. Muni informs me that he was then enrolled in a South Asia program at the University of Rajasthan. The first overseas South Asia center was established in Heidelberg in 2009 (Ghosh 2013). We shall use this term to describe India and most of its neighbors. Certainly it should include the physically and culturally contiguous countries (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka). These are members of SAARC (the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, founded in the early 1980s). One non-member, Burma (Myanmar) used to be part of the Raj, while China is a de facto South Asian power by virtue of its cultural, political, and military links to these states.

While a commonly accepted term, South Asia's coherence is questionable. The World Bank and other sources show that South Asia is the world's politically and economically *least* integrated region, as well as one of the most violent (Cohen 2013). There may be vital cultural links, traditional trade ties, but it lags on many measures.

Four factors shape India's position in this region: (1) the mixed imperial legacy, (2) an interplay between geography, strategy, and technology, (3) the regional ideological irruption, and, finally (4) the role of outside powers. India adapted stratagems by which it could lead, escape from, or transcend its neighborhood region, but its regional position remains indeterminate.

The Broken Imperial Legacy

George Friedman, echoing an earlier school of geopolitics, has called South Asia a self-contained region, an 'island', surrounded on the southeast, south, and southwest by the Bay of Bengal, the Indian Ocean, and the Arabian sea; it is also framed by mountains that run through Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Nepal, with deserts (in the west), the malarial Terai in the north, and rainforests in the east (Friedman 2008). George Tanham wrote an influential and much-debated book, which echoed K. M. Panikkar's earlier writings, on India's strategic legacy and whether it has a strategic tradition (Panikkar 1963).

Yet, India is not cut off from its neighbors. Its borders with Pakistan, Burma, Bangladesh, and Nepal are arbitrary, and are passable on land and by air. The sea is also navigable, as India discovered when Mumbai was attacked by Pakistani terrorists who took small boats to their target. The movement across South Asian borders of populations, ideas, diseases, weather, and smuggled goods continues. The frame may be permanent, but it is permeable, and India is susceptible to regional developments, positive and negative.

During most of its known history India/South Asia was divided into several regional political systems, a few of these eventually expanding to encompass most of the subcontinent (Chapman 2009; Schwartzberg 1992). Of nine powers that achieved pan-Indian status (covering at least four of India's five major regions), seven were centered on the North Indian plain. Of 63 pan- and supra-regional powers (defined as powers that covered at least two regions), 28 had their base in the north Indian plain, and all but five or six decades of pan-Indian rule were based there.

The rise of the Mughals in 1526 AD led to a major change in India's political integration. There had been a 600-year gap following the previous Indian dynasty, the Guptas (319–950 AD). Like medieval Europe, the states and dynasties during this period were confined to one or more regions. The centering of India's recent dominant political systems in the north explains, in part, why Indian strategists have historically looked north and west for their threats, and why Indians have generally neglected the Indian Ocean region and naval power, the scholar-diplomat K. M. Panikkar being an early and important exception. Panikkar contrasted India's connectivity via the ocean, to the great barrier between it and other peoples thrown up by the Himalayas. As a result, he writes, 'politically India was isolated from the rest of the continent and became introspective in its attitudes. There was no appreciation of the point of view of other nations who, to the Hindus, virtually did not exist or were known only by distant rumour' (Panikkar 1963: 31–2).

The north also provides the source of the dominant Indian tradition of statecraft. Scholars generally agree that the formative era of Indian civilization was the period that spanned the writing of the Hindu scriptures, the Upanishads, and the development of the Mauryan Empire (321–181 BC) under Emperor Asoka. The Indian imperial vision was then defined, even though by 180 BC this first attempt at imperial government

ended. The desire for empire remained, but without the success of the Mauryas, Guptas, Mughals, and British. The same can be said of free India's 70 years: there has been ambition aplenty, but marked strategic under-achievement.

Early Indian empires had an answer to the problem of maintaining stability and security in a closed political system, but not to the problem of extra-regional incursions. Kautilya's *mandala* or circle of states, was rooted in the geopolitics of the north Indian plain. Extended military movement was possible and aggressive kings were the norm rather than the exception. The *Arthashastra* assumed cultural and military homogeneity, and offered rules for the conduct of statecraft; and was more a guide to subcontinental than international (or intercultural) politics. Later dynasties were devastated when they applied Hindu norms and doctrines to invading Greeks, Huns, Scythians, Muslims, or Europeans.

The 1,500 years of Hindu colonialism, mostly in Burma and South-East Asia, were largely economic, cultural, and religious, comparable to the Sinicization of parts of East and South-East Asia, not extensions of an India-based power. It may be that Indian society was so well-adapted to overseas expansion that little or no force was needed.

The theory of an Indian empire enabled the British East India Company to retain the fiction that it ruled on behalf of the Mughals. After the Mutiny of 1857 the fiction was discarded and India was ruled directly from London as part of a larger *British* Empire. India had already been apprenticed to the idea of unity—the British built upon foundations in place. Their own Indian Empire (the 'Raj' or 'rule' in Sanskrit) was accepted by large numbers of Indians as legitimate, although there was ambivalence among the hundreds of Indian Princely States which were never formally incorporated into the Raj. Some of the princes, such as Hyderabad in the south, controlled vast enterprises, with their own traditions of regional statecraft; this was also true of several dynasties based in present-day Andhra and Tamil Nadu that created and dominated vast overseas empires in South-East Asia.

The initial British conquest was organized and led by professional soldiers in the service of a private company chartered by the British Crown. The East India Company and the Raj developed a statecraft and an imperial governmental structure over a hundred-year period with roots in the Mughal Empire's conduct of subcontinental relations including relations with nearby imperial powers—China, Iran, and Russia. Most of the structure was dismantled, with the Indian army partitioned and the Indian Political Service (IPS)—which dealt with neighbors and with the Princely States—dissolved upon independence (Creagh Coen 1971; Cohen 1971). These two imperial bureaucracies had enabled New Delhi to extend its influence from the Gulf to the Far East, and northward into Tibet.

The partition of the Indian army, by removing much of its Punjabi element, deprived it of influence in India, and its political inclinations were carefully monitored for decades. The IPS's functions were taken over by the new Indian Ministry of External Affairs, the Home Ministry, and after the 1962 war with China, the foreign intelligence service, Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW). These all lacked experience even as Nehru rejected the imperial role for India.

The British had bequeathed a number of important geopolitical norms. These included the need for buffers to the north, sea denial in and around the Indian peninsula, and the protection of an inner ring of defense, with a periphery that included the smaller states around India. In the lead-up to partition British Indian strategists assumed that India would remain in the Commonwealth as a dominion, and did not anticipate partition. They regarded India as a key component of a global strategy to contain both Islamic extremism and communism. As one historian notes, it was thought that India would exercise influence along the Asian rim sufficient 'to hold the power based in the heartland' (Brobst 2005: 15). As he notes, the subcontinent's partition represented the failure, not the fulfillment, of imperial designs. The British Indian army generals and the IPS officers all wanted to see India remain united, and endorsed the creation of an independent Pakistan only as a problematic last resort. (Cohen, 2014 archives)

Emerging from the Second World War as the world's fourth largest industrial power and second most populous state, Indian leaders focused on achieving independence and let pass the opportunity to stake a claim as a permanent member of the UN Security Council. Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai, a senior Indian civil servant who represented the Raj in Washington during and immediately after the Second World War, did not, apparently, have the question of UN membership as part of his agenda, nor were the British eager to have on the Council an India led by Nehru and Congress.

The Raj's bitter end doomed India to live with a hostile and surprisingly effective neighbor. It left behind an embittered generation on both sides of the border, and they have codified and institutionalized grievances and embedded them in national psyches. Nehru, like the British, did not expect this to occur. Shortly after independence he publicly stated that 'India and Pakistan shared a common heritage and history. They had close economic relations, which, if broken for the time being, would have to be established again.' The two states were neighbors and could not live in isolation of each other. There were, according to Nehru, only two courses, 'they could either unite or go to war with each other'. Even if there was a war it could not last forever and after that 'they will have to follow the other course of merging themselves into one united country' (Nehru 1947). The new Indian leaders—notably Nehru—were unprepared and naïve, no matter how noble their language and intentions. Nehru's views were premature, but not incorrect. Nehru's concept of India as something more than a South Asian power was unpersuasive in the 1950s. His claim that India could lead this expanded concept of Asia was dismissed by China, rejected by its one strong regional neighbor, Pakistan, and ignored by the superpowers. Nehru was right in predicting an end to the Cold War and a transformed international order, but he was wrong in his expectation that India and China might form the core of an 'Asian' alliance or that Pakistan and India could end their disputes amicably.

As a middle power, India waited for either a call from one of the superpowers or their decline. The call never came, and the decay of one superpower was not followed by the other, but by the growing capabilities of China. India's economic growth still lags, it

is engaged in a fruitless military and nuclear rivalry, and it is frequently paired with a smaller and weaker Pakistan, which challenges India in South Asia and beyond. Further, Pakistan has developed the knack of bringing in outside powers who, sometimes unwittingly, are used to balance India.

Geography and Technology

Tanham triggered a lively debate about the linkage between geography and Indian strategy, although he was merely repeating some of the criticisms of Indian isolationism and exceptionalism described by Panikkar. Some argue that 'power and national security are essentially based on geographic factors' (Singh 2009), others stressed that a strategic equalizer can be achieved through the development of advanced technologies, hypocritically denied to India by the West (Subramanyam 2005).

Geography is not a permanent, unchanging factor, nor is technology the key to strategic dominance. Relations between states are routinely transformed by technology and environmental and climatic change; it is not even a good predictor of wealth or power (Acemoglu and Robinson 2012). South Asia is the least economically integrated region in the world, but not because of geography or technology.

In terms of connectivity South Asia has moved backward since 1947 and individual states have neglected their own infrastructure. Geopolitical determinists harp on how if India is to become a stable and secure nation state it must dominate the South Asian land mass, specifically Pakistan and Bangladesh, controlling in the west the only 'viable' land route for the invasion of the subcontinent, and then, with the entire land mass under its control, either directly or through alliances, begin building a navy (Friedman 2008). Friedman's views echo those of Panikkar, an early advocate for Indian naval power (Panikkar 1945). Yet after 1947 regional rail systems were abandoned, roads were blocked, and air services lag behind other regions. Also, South Asia has some of the most inefficient ports in the world. On the whole, India has disconnected itself from regional neighbors. The new political boundaries are as impermeable as any mountain range or desert, encouraging a vast smuggling network and the illegal movement of people between India and other regional states.

The assumption behind this restrictive policy seems to be that improving access between India and its neighbors promotes interference in India, not access for India to the rest of the region and beyond, and for Nehruvians this forced India to be self-reliant.

Further, technology has been used in ways that overshadow feeble economic ties. Great expenditures on research enabled the Indian and Pakistan armies to fight the highest mountain battles in history and to put together the largest armored force seen since the Second World War in desert terrain thought to be impassable. The boast of both armies that they can fight such battles is a testimony to their inventiveness but a condemnation of the politicians and diplomats who cannot find other ways to resolve political differences.

India's 1998 nuclear weapons tests seemed to be the act of a rising power. They were coupled with a sharp political attack on the weakest of the great powers (China) and an appeal for strategic cooperation with the biggest (America). However, Washington responded with surprise at the notion that China might pose a threat to India and joined Beijing in issuing a statement condemning the tests. The Indian strategic community confronts a world in which China has elevated itself to the first rank of powers without Indian assistance or even a close relationship with New Delhi. Now India and Pakistan are among the fastest-growing nuclear powers in the world. India and Pakistan have between 110 and 120 nuclear weapons, China about 250 (SIPRI 2013). While the nuclear doctrines of India and Pakistan (and China) seem to be one of restraint and slow growth—not emulating the superpower arms racing of past decades, they do give these governments the ability to destroy each other's major urban centers. As Rajesh Basrur writes, India has no serious policy to address this problem, is locked in an arms crawl with Pakistan, and as Admiral Verghese Koithara has pointed out, there is inconsistency between India's declaration of being a nuclear state and its actual nuclear weapons infrastructure (Basrur 2006; Koithara 2012). This makes irrelevant some of the geostrategic thinking and military assumptions that guided regional strategists for 50 years. Large-scale war between India and its two nuclear neighbors is improbable but not impossible; the post-1998 spate of India–Pakistan crises suggest sober thinking about their nuclear futures, and a better understanding of conflicts that fall well below the imagined nuclear threshold.

While the movement of people and goods may now be more difficult in South Asia than in the British and Mughal periods, there is one area where advanced technologies have torn down barriers. Nehru used to write of how India could leapfrog old technologies, with positive consequences (Cohen 1998). Nehru's most cherished technology, nuclear reactors, has technical problems and needs help, as does the entire military production system. One wonders what Nehru would think of the advent of electronic communications and the speed with which ideas—bad and good—are communicated to audiences. Films, videos, the internet, and other media have allowed like-minded individuals to communicate with each other across boundaries, often in their own language; they have also exposed citizens of these countries to the new phenomenon of crazed talk show hosts, vicious polemical websites, and the unhindered spread of radical ideas. This kind of technological leapfrogging is a mixed blessing, and India is rushing to catch up with the cyber terrorists and proponents of revolution and terrorism, both domestic and foreign.

Ideologies

South Asia is characterized by different theories about organizing socially complex states and peoples. The Nehruvian view plays the long game: a benevolent, secular India will, sooner or later, dominate the region peacefully, and its minorities would be protected by the state. The Hindutva view, epitomized by the new Prime Minister Narendra Modi, stresses that Hinduism's inherent tolerance ensures that loyal minorities will be protected.

The movement for Pakistan broke the strategic unity of South Asia. It was a symptom of historical ennui among Muslims, especially after the fall of the Ottoman Empire. There have always been claims to lead the Islamic world—the most recent being al Qaeda—and with the world's largest Muslim population such claims resonated in South Asia. Pakistan was a code word for political space for Muslims, but Nehru and others were not willing to bend their secularism, and believed that the Pakistani experiment would fail. The insistence on privileges for minorities, typified by Jinnah and the Muslim League, won the day, and the Muslim majority regions of India were formed into a new state.

Claims for a Muslim-majority Pakistan found a parallel among Hindus, some of whom imagine India as a powerful, *Hindu* state with an obligation to combat hostile Western and Islamic ideologies and protect worldwide Hindu minorities. Such Hinduism has been influenced deeply by revivalist Islamic movements, and there is no clear Hindu identity in India—although the agenda of the Hindu Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) is to create one. Both Islamism and revivalist Hinduism were strengthened by Wilsonian ideas of national self determination. Ironically, both had the common goal of anti-colonialism. These religious and linguistic identity movements were also boosted by the fall of communism, which opened the floodgates for their claims for autonomy and statehood. Hindus and Muslims (and Sikhs and other minorities) could plausibly argue that 'their' homeland deserved autonomy if not independence.

All of these ideologies are based on a fallacy—that if people have one thing in common, such as a history of being oppressed, then they have enough in common to form their own nation. Nehru's view was that oppression by Western powers was adequate glue to keep people together. His dream of non-alignment rested on the like-mindedness of those who suffered under colonialism. For Nehru, China was India's natural Asian partner; together he hoped that they would shape the destiny of Asia by challenging, and defeating the Eurocentric world that had made India a colony and China a weak, semi-occupied state (Nehru 1989).

Put another way, the view that producing harmony in one sphere will lead to harmony in all was deeply flawed. There was no better example than Kashmir. The conflict represents the merger of three ideological strands: an extreme belief in majoritism, a rigid interpretation of the rights of minorities, and an infusion of Wilsonian self-determination. It is both a cause and an effect of India–Pakistan hostility and a temptation for meddling outside powers. Some Indians dismiss Kashmir as a subregional issue, on the margin of events—its population is just about 1 per cent of India's and 6 per cent of Pakistan's. However, embedded in the Kashmir dispute is the worst kind of Wilsonianism, Pakistani irredentism, and the failure of Indian imagination.

Outside Powers

A persistent theme in Indian thinking is that outside powers gained an advantage in the subcontinent because of their superior military technology and the ease with which

they played one local ruler against another. Both memories persist, and outsiders are judged by their willingness to share military and other advanced technologies, and by their assumed craftiness in dividing India from its neighbors. Partition was an invitation to outsiders to interfere in South Asia, to either undercut New Delhi or pursue some larger strategic objective with a willing regional partner.

Pakistan was the most important subcontinental state to develop such ties, borrowing power to apply against India. In turn, its allies were Great Britain, America, and China, with flirtations with France, the Soviet Union, Saudi Arabia, and Iran. To a lesser extent other regional states also developed external ties, Sri Lanka with the United Kingdom, the United States, and China, Nepal with China and the United States, and since 1972, Bangladesh with the United States and China.

All of this is maddening to the Indian strategic community. Outside assistance made Pakistan a major military power. It has enabled Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Bangladesh to defy New Delhi. The result is that it is difficult to either formulate a regional consensus or to undercut the power of the more obstreperous of India's neighbors. While no South Asian state has obtained an outside security guarantee against India, all of them, with the help of others, resist what they see as Indian dominance.

India has failed to develop, lead, and dominate; South Asian organizations such as SAARC remain moribund—except for its new South Asian University. It cannot be compared to the Shanghai Cooperative Organization and other groupings dependent upon Chinese leadership, or even the old Soviet-sponsored Warsaw Pact, or present-day NATO. Those who look for a South Asian ASEAN search in vain.

As Alexander Evans points out, Pakistan is India's short- or medium-term problem, but China is the long-term strategic challenge (Evans 2012). The two resemble each other in that they are states which encompass a civilizational identity, and distinct—but different—views of history. The collapse of the Ch'in empire meant that China's borders were loosely defined for nearly a hundred years, with resultant ambiguity over sovereignty, borders, and control of peoples. In 1949 a weak China was replaced by a hyper-sensitive China, one that was obsessed with borders imposed by various foreign powers. India still has a live border and territorial dispute with the People's Republic.

Indian hawks argued for years that China will never make concessions to India on their border dispute until India became a nuclear equal. But China seems unimpressed by India's nuclear arsenal. Chinese officials have outlined the deal they have offered the Indians—recently hardening their position regarding Tawang in the east. This is unacceptable to either Congress or the BJP, and the border issue is hostage to intense feelings about the sanctity of territory on both sides. It is unlikely that India will contemplate a territorial settlement with China as long as nationalist feelings, which permeate the armies on both sides, remain intense; the earlier hope that India could conclude a border deal with China once it went nuclear has been belied.

Like the Japanese and the Koreans, the Chinese find it difficult to imagine how such a complicated region can make much progress at home or in international affairs, since it lacks discipline and coherence, let alone a credible leader. Indian assertiveness, the Chinese believe, does not seem to be justified, given New Delhi's feeble economic and strategic record.

At the same time, Chinese strategists dwell on what they regard as India's hegemonism. The widespread view in Beijing is that India inherited and still pursues British imperial policies. India's insistence upon the British-imposed MacMahon Line along their border, Delhi's absorption of Sikkim (recognized by China after 2003), India's treaties with Nepal and Bangladesh, and its dream of subcontinental unity are evidence to them of India's hegemonistic strategy. From Beijing's perspective, India poses little threat to China, but Beijing is wary of the re-emergence of an alliance between New Delhi and some major state, a role that the Soviet Union filled for many years.

China pursues a classic balance of power strategy by comprehensive support of Pakistan, the largest recipient of Chinese aid, and nuclear and missile technology. For China, Pakistan is the perfect ally. Support for Islamabad balanced out Soviet *and* Indian power (and initially, US power). After the cutoff of America aid in 1965, China's support made it possible for Pakistan to offer a credible defense against Indian conventional weapons and to acquire nuclear weapons that have both a defensive and a deterrent capability. China has supplanted the Soviet Union as the South Asian power with close ties to all South Asian states—even to India, where it is New Delhi's largest trading partner.

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 alarmed New Delhi. Under the British, Afghanistan was seen as a buffer state that shielded India from Russian, Soviet, and German pressure. For 50 years, India has pursued a policy of using Afghanistan to counter Pakistan. Whether or not this was a conscious application of the *mandala*, it was a classic expression of realpolitik—India's enemy's enemy, Afghanistan, had become a friend, but neither India nor Pakistan could overcome their rivalry and work together to prevent the intervention of both superpowers into Afghanistan.

India was leaning towards the losing side when the Cold War ended. The Soviet Union was India's chief weapons supplier, creating a continuing security crisis. India also lost a major trading partner, one that would purchase inferior Indian goods in exchange for weapons, industrial goods, and oil, and it lost an uncritical backer in UN forums. Perhaps more subtly, the end of communism as a major world ideology contributed to the acceleration of ethnic and religious identity movements. These challenge all South Asian states, none more than multi-ethnic multi-confessional India. Two other consequences must be noted, one temporary, the other more enduring. A generation of Indian leaders, academics, and strategists grew up in the belief that the Cold War stalemate was in India's interests, and that a tilt towards the Soviet Union was a necessary corrective policy, keeping capitalist America at bay. That generation is still influential, and a more realistic worldview will only advance funeral by funeral. The other consequence was a realization that if the Soviet Union could disappear, other states—including India itself—were not bulletproof. While most Indians are persuaded that Pakistan is not a viable state, the deeper premises of Partition still frame regional politics, the first and foremost being the alignment of ethnicity and territory, irregardless of economics and strategy.

Of the major outside powers, the United States has less of a South Asia policy than either Russia or China. President Franklin D. Roosevelt favored the breakup of the British Empire, but when the Congress party seemed to be tilting towards the Axis powers, and one prominent leader, Subhas Chandra Bose, fought on their side, Washington's

enthusiasm for Indian independence was shelved. After the Second World War, South Asia was on the Cold War's periphery. India's strategic marginality was reinforced by the practice of viewing Asia as a series of subregions, some more important than others. 'India' became a state in 'South Asia', jostling for attention in the foreign ministries of the world with South-East and East Asia, the Middle East, and other Cold War battlegrounds. These constructed subregions displaced the older, expanded notion of Asia.

Indian strategists, such the scholar-diplomat K. M. Panikkar, challenged this framework because they understood that it placed India on the edge of the new global strategic order and separated India from regions with which it had a long cultural and strategic association. Panikkar argued for an expanded notion of an 'Indian Ocean region' that included the territory stretching from East Africa to South-East Asia (Panikkar 1969). Like many other Indians, including Nehru, who called present-day South-East Asia 'farther India', Panikkar was aware that the global system had changed after the expansion of European power and he prophetically argued that it could change again.

While Pakistan's attraction as a US ally-in-hand outweighed that of India as a prospective ally, India was not ignored. After the 1962 China war, Washington provided India with significant grant military aid, and it received the largest amount of foreign aid of any country. After the Cold War this policy was replaced by an American obsession with nuclear proliferation, then to be replaced by a concern with Islamic extremism. No American administration has had a comprehensive South Asian policy, and Indian and Pakistani policies were delinked—except during crises.

For India this presented both an opportunity and a problem. The opportunity was to use the United States against Pakistan, which it did after the 1999 Kargil war. Yet, Washington listening to Pakistan's voice, showed little concern for India's interests in Afghanistan. America, unlike China or Russia, shows no sign of developing a coherent South Asia policy: it is thus susceptible to being swept away by events—ranging from nuclear tests to terrorism. Being pro-democracy is not an event, and in any case all South Asian states can lay a claim to American attention on that ground.

Stratagems

After the end of the Cold War there were adjustments in Indian policy. Economic reform was initiated (20 years after China's), there was a nuclear breakout, temporarily straining relations with Washington, and there was a renewed attempt to achieve military self-sufficiency. The latter led India to a détente with Israel, once India realized that the Jewish state—which it regarded as an analogy of Pakistan—also a state founded on a religious identity, could be a source of advanced technology, and there is now a close military/intelligence relationship.

The hope was that the United States would not again back Pakistan, that Indian military power could neutralize Pakistan and China, overawe any smaller neighbor, and that India could do what the United States, Germany, Japan, China, and Brazil were doing in

their regions—take the lead in what was the most disorganized regional economy in the world. These turned out to be mostly hopes.

In Central Asia India lacks the geographic access, a strategy, and the resources to rise above the competition. Again guided largely by a desire to outflank Pakistan, India comes in second or third in every competition there with China, Russia, or the United States. Over one year after the announcement of its 2012 'Connect Central Asia Policy', New Delhi was sidelined in four of the five Central Asian Republics. Moscow essentially shut India out of Kyrgyzstan and India lost access to the Tajikistan Ayni airbase; New Delhi was sidelined by China's assertive energy policy in the energy-rich nations of Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan (Tanchum 2013).

It is much the same story in South-East Asia. In 1992 Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao instituted what was termed a 'Look East' policy. Designed to repair relations with the economic tigers while preserving a strategic relationship with Vietnam, it signified a change in two areas: a lessened resistance to *regional cooperation* and a more open economic policy. No longer as fearful of India after the end of the Soviet Union, many South-East Asian states see India as a potential balancer to China, but its engagement in South-East Asia is that of a minor power. India has created or joined more such organizations than it can manage or control, and its contribution is marginal, at best. India's links to Central or South-East Asia have not caught fire, compared with the groupings that China has sponsored, or with the old military alliances spawned by the Soviet Union and the United States.

As far as India's regional policy is concerned, the history of the post-Cold War period is one of lost opportunity, a shortage of imagination and trained manpower, and a paucity of assets. The nuclear tests plunged India and Pakistan into a series of crises, and they have not moved to détente, taking advantage of the bomb's benign side—the bomb acts like curare on the impetus to war. India also lacks a strategy by which its other neighbors can be wooed; it plays defense in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Burma, and even Afghanistan trying to counter the penetration of other powers, notably China. Despite a nuclear deal that restored normalcy, India and the United States regard each other warily, and India is economically dependent on China, its long-term strategic rival.

The Indian elite consensus is that the world should be dominated by a few great powers pledged to avoid interference across regions. Indian diplomacy has worked for nearly seven decades to bring about such a world but it is more distant now than in 1947. What it has *not* done is as important as what it has failed to do. Its regional leadership is crippled by the way that Indian domestic politics inhibits close relations with neighbors; the compulsions of coalition politics have led to the outsourcing of regional foreign policy to India's states. These dictate policy regarding Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Bangladesh. Defense policy is no longer made by an increasingly weak Ministry of Defense—there may be civilian control but there is no credible civilian direction. Perhaps the most direct and detrimental influence of a bad partition is in India's Afghan policy. There is a misreading of history regarding Pakistan's interference in Afghanistan as the product of its military dictators or the West (epitomized in the Indian mind by the British scholar William Dalrymple) allegedly equating India and Pakistan, and the 'hyphenation' of

India and Pakistan (Dalrymple 2013; Pai 2013). Both countries share the Raj's legacy in Afghanistan, but are unable to act upon that shared interest, nor have outside powers encouraged them to do so.

India also lacks the bureaucratic heft to conduct a maximalist foreign policy, whether in the region or elsewhere. It has belatedly tried to increase the number of foreign service experts, but the Indian Foreign Service is about half its desired size and the intelligence services play a major role with neighbors.

Finally, attempts to build up a military capability that would dominate South Asia have produced little: not only have nuclear weapons made obsolete much of the oversized army, India has been slow to move in areas, such as naval power, where it could become a major force if it cooperated with outside powers—India has been arming without aiming (Cohen and Dasgupta 2013; Routray 2013; Srinath 2013). It may be the world's largest arms importer, but that is because the state bureaucracy, the Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO) is unable to produce weapons of quality. The percentage of GDP and government expenditure spent on capital equipment, hardware, and infrastructure has steadily declined since the 1990s; and much of that expenditure is on personnel, especially for the huge Indian army and bloated paramilitary forces. Nehru shared a vision that the latecomer had a special advantage by leaping over years of stagnation with the adoption of new technologies, but the obsession with some questionable nuclear technologies, and the habit of blaming others for their technological retentiveness shifts the blame elsewhere for the failure to develop relevant military capabilities.

Pratap Bhanu Mehta has written that South Asia is a region without norms and that India has no policy that would provide a framework for the region; he suggests that a regional consensus be built on human rights, but this seems unlikely (Mehta 2013). The neo-Nehruvian document, 'Nonalignment 2.0', does not even mention SAARC, although it is enthusiastic about the chimerical goal of a UN Security Council seat (CPR 2012). Uninterested in a meaningful relationship with NATO, cautious about the only remaining superpower, the United States, India is disinterested in becoming a rule shaper (Price 2013) and has alienated its most important neighbors. At home it never made the concessions that would have allowed SAARC to function, but New Delhi has been an enthusiastic participant in wide range of other regional groupings. As for its relationship with the still-important America, Indian policy-makers relish making the point that it is not an alliance, but a 'strategic' relationship, in the same category as those, apparently, with other 'strategic partners' like Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan; in the words of Foreign Minister Salman Kurshid, 'We will never be allies of the US; we will be friends, strategic partners, not allies. And similarly we will be strategic partners with China; hopefully, we will become friends with China when all our issues are resolved; we have a very good working relationship with them, but we have things to resolve with them' (Kurshid 2013). In fairness, one senior Indian official, mindful of past crises where the United States played a constructive role, quipped that 'we should never say never'.

With national elections looming, and the prospect of a new government in New Delhi, the foreign policy community needs to ask five questions regarding India's relations with others in South Asia:

- Which comes first: democracy or stability? India faces the same problem as Israel in sequencing democratization and normalization in its neighborhood. Delhi needs to decide whether it wants its neighbors to resemble secular, democratic India or whether it wants peace with them, an especially real problem in the case of relations with Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Nepal.
- Can India again conceive of South Asia as a strategic whole, and functionally reunite the region? To do so it must redefine Pakistan as Pakistan, not a second-rate India. Indian identity is often defined in terms of negative 'others'. India shares many qualities with these states. Indians emphasize strongly that their state is *not* Pakistan which means that they tend to play down common elements, and therefore make it harder to cooperate with Islamabad, let alone the smaller states.
- Can India take the lead in *nuclear* policies, going back to the regional approach it suggested in the Rajiv Gandhi action plan? India's policy is frozen in the past and on global reduction to zero, a goal that is neither serious nor a guide to policy.
- Can India build on common interests with China? With a mixture of pragmatic cooperation, strengthening its economic base, improving its military capabilities, and showing some flexibility on the border issue, India might be taken more seriously by China. India is becoming more like China as it modernizes and transforms its own economy; China will become more like India as the process of social and political transformation continues. It is too early to predict 'convergence', but the two countries may come to the realization that they have an important common strategic interest, including reminding Americans of the limits of American power, and preventing the inevitable political disruptions of their smaller or less-stable neighbors from precipitating a conflict between them.
- What are Indian expectations of the United States and other 'strategic partners-but-not-allies' should New Delhi find itself in a war or crisis with Pakistan or China, as it did in 1962, 1965, 1971, and the several post-nuclear crises of recent years?

Conclusion

Looking ahead there is little chance that India can restore the regional power exercised by the Mughals and the British, let alone earlier empires. If nothing else, the existence of nuclear weapons makes the breakup of Pakistan too dangerous, and India has no answer to the military and economic expansion of China, except to bemoan it. The subtraction of Indian power by Pakistani power means that China can bypass India where possible and confront it with superior forces where necessary. Theoretically, India could move closer to a major extra-regional power, such as the United States, but anti-colonialism and anti-Americanism linger, and may have been passed to a third generation. Could it turn to China as an Asian partner? This would be in keeping with early Indian dreams of a united Asia, but the geopolitical boundaries between the two states have to be carefully drawn.

The overblown expectations generated by the 2005 nuclear agreement led to American disillusionment. Normal relations with Pakistan are theoretically possible, but my analysis is that this will not happen for years, if ever. Pakistan and India are ships that pass in the night, better perhaps than ships that collide and sink in the night.

India may be 'rising' and 'emerging', but these are euphemisms for being one of the strongest of the world's middle powers, and less than that in some spheres. Being a 'great' power involves a cluster of attitudes and policies, which derive from a particular location in an international order. 'Great' states are in the habit of claiming superior rights and accepting special responsibilities and often cast themselves as the managers of the international system. India is a 'great' state in South Asia but not outside the region. India is the weakest of the great states; it cannot be ignored, but neither is it a whole power. India will have one foot in the 'developing' world and one in the world of advanced economic and military powers for the indefinite future.

An India that continues to reform its economy and comes to terms with Pakistan could be a force for stability in Asia, a partner in humanitarian intervention in Africa and other war-torn regions. Should the contingency arise, it could be a partner in the containment of a threatening or expansionist China. Even an India that grows slowly and does not solve its Pakistan problem will still have great influence in the non-Western world.

Can India forge regional integrative institutions while simultaneously promoting economic growth under conditions of political democracy? This is a feat that no other large state except the United States has attempted, and that under far more favorable geopolitical and economic circumstances. It is a task of awe-inspiring magnitude. It remains the strongest basis for an Indian claim for support, sympathy, and assistance.

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CHAPTER 26

CHINA

ALKA ACHARYA

Introduction

For almost 50 years after their emergence as independent nation states in the late 1940s, India's relationship with China had a highly uneven trajectory, marked by extreme vicissitudes. These decades do not lend themselves to easy periodization, punctured as they were by intense mutual suspicion, an occasional turn to fraternal bonhomie, a border war, bitter exchanges, and near conflict scenarios. It took almost three decades after the 1962 conflict for this relationship to start acquiring a more comprehensive and multi-dimensional character. Significant hurdles have marred the progress towards normalization, namely, the issue of Tibet, the China–Pakistan alliance, the contested boundary, and the role of major powers. Since the 1990s, the increasing power asymmetry and economic gap—by 2013, China's GDP had become four times larger than that of India—has further complicated India's engagement with China.

Since the last decade of the twentieth century, Delhi's engagement with China at all levels—bilateral, regional, and global—has steadily expanded. The rise of China—as well as the slower emergence of India—has contributed to an increasing significance of their relationship for each other (and of this relationship for global politics). The dynamics of this phase are being shaped by their respective domestic imperatives of development and modernization, a rapidly transforming regional environment, the forces of economic globalization, and the newer security challenges—arguably, the degree of strategic importance they accord to each other, may well vary.

History as Prelude

In the case of civilizational-states such as India and China, it is evident that there are sturdy historical legacies that are manifest in the present, which still inform attitudes

and perceptions on both sides. While scholars and academics have different assessments about the nature of the peaceful coexistence, as also the mutually enriching cultural and economic interactions 'across the Himalayan gap' over the centuries (Tan 1998; Tan et al. 2013), it is regularly invoked in laudatory terms by the leadership on both sides. Some uphold the sense of 'ageless brotherhood', others have cautioned against romanticizing these ties; but there is no doubt that this long history adds considerable depth to the relationship.

There is an ancient history of civilizational encounters, when Buddhism travelled from India to China, along with a rich consignment of ideas, texts, and values. The names of Fa Xian, Xuan Zhang, and Kumarajiva are legendary in this account of cross-cultural fertilization. There is another history of these two economically powerful and prosperous empires during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, dominating world trade with flourishing and dynamic trade routes criss-crossing their frontier regions and constituting the hub of international relations at the time. There is yet another—and extremely rich—tapestry of interactions between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries, when these two great civilizations and proud empires were humbled, and bled white by Western imperialist dominance. Their shared experiences during their respective struggles for independence and liberation from the colonial yoke found expression in Rabindranath Tagore's 1924 China visit, which had a major impact on the Chinese intelligentsia—though he came in for a fair share of criticism as well from some nationalist sections as well as the proponents of Westernization. Shared perspectives on imperialism were also seen in the interaction between the Indian delegation led by Nehru and the Chinese delegation at the Congress of Oppressed Nationalities in Brussels in 1927. The two delegations issued a Joint Statement that outlined many of the ideas that endured in the coming decades and subsequently, the Indian National Congress was to express firm solidarity with China in its war against Japanese occupation. India's active contribution in the shape of Dr Kotnis's medical mission during the revolutionary struggles continues to resonate in the Chinese acknowledgement of India's role even today.

During the early 1950s, both played a leading role in the Asian resurgence and represented two different politico-economic models for the newly independent Asian and African countries. Despite the bipolar backdrop, a degree of autonomy from the typical Cold War framework was evident in their interactions (Bhattacharjea 2001). Finally, there is the most recent history, which began in 1962. The question is, what aspect of this long history would prove to be of the greatest consequence in shaping this relationship in the current era of economic globalization and their respective—though vastly different—rise to great power status?

These new nation states were bold and ambitious in seeking to change the course of Asia and international relations. In the ideologically carved bipolar world order of the time, whilst the People's Republic of China (PRC) was unambiguously aligned with the Soviet Union and the socialist bloc, India opted to follow a policy of non-alignment. In Nehru's worldview, any alignment in the ongoing Cold War politics would only compromise India's hard-won independence. For the PRC on the contrary, the world situation necessarily imposed a choice between the two camps.

The communist regime which came to power in Beijing did not, in Nehru's assessment, necessitate any substantial alterations in the fundamental framework of Indian foreign policy. He certainly refused to be hustled into any anti-communist posture per se, merely on account of the Cold War. As he put it, 'we have chosen our path and we propose to go along it, and to vary it as and when we choose, and not at somebody's dictate or pressure ... Our thinking and our approach do not fit in with this great crusade of communism ... or anti-communism' (Nehru 1961: 68–69).

Indian and Chinese historical experience and common concerns, Nehru believed, called for a policy of friendship and cooperation—any other approach would only lead to confrontation and draw hostile lines across Asia. He was also convinced that given the possibility of superpower intervention, China would never attack India. India thus became the first Asian non-communist country to recognize the new regime in China and has consistently upheld the 'one-China' policy.

The crux of the PRC's problem with Nehru and the nature of the political leadership in India, was unquestionably about Tibet. Nehru was characterized as a 'stooge' and 'running dog of British and American imperialism (Jain 1960: 6–9)'. Suspicions were generated in India as well, by the Chinese consolidation of military and administrative control of Tibet in January 1950. Subsequently, India's role and diplomacy in the 1950–3 Korean War (which directly contributed to the PRC being invited to the Geneva peace talks), and the nationalistic upsurge in the Afro-Asian world during the 1950s, led to a change in the Chinese evaluation of the non-aligned countries and brought the desired break in India–China relations. Nearly a million Chinese lined up to welcome Nehru on his visit to China in 1954 and Zhou's return visit to India in 1954 affirmed the shift in China's strategic perspective. 'We two countries differ in the roads to independence, but we share the same goals in maintaining independence, building nations and safeguarding peace' (Nehru 1961). The 'Agreement on Trade and Intercourse between India and China relating to Tibet' signed on the occasion, incorporated the *Panchsheel*—the Five Principles of Peaceful Cooperation—which can be seen as the first joint political contribution of India and China to contemporary foreign policy semantics. The concept has a pan-Asian appeal and did become the model for the PRC's agreements with many other countries. With the signing of *Panchsheel*, however, India formally renounced its traditional privileges and position in Tibet, which it had inherited from the British, and established the official Indian position that Tibet was a part of China and that India would not permit any anti-China activity on its soil.

Thereafter began a short-lived, but extremely friendly and cordial phase of Sino-Indian relations, epitomized in the slogan *Hindi-Chini Bhai-Bhai* (Indians and Chinese are brothers). In retrospect, this phase was so brief that it is surprising that it had indeed camouflaged the contentious issues in the relationship. The Chinese move into Tibet had caused a furore in India, but Nehru resisted the demand in the Indian Parliament to take on a tough posture and attempted to 'strike a balance between the trend of Indian popular feeling and the need to maintain Sino-Indian friendship' (Jetly 1979: 296). Subsequently when the Dalai Lama sought and obtained political asylum in India in the wake of the Tibetan uprising in 1959, India–China relations were stretched

to breaking point, especially with the establishment of the Tibetan government-in-exile in Dharamsala, where the Dalai Lama had settled. Though it was not accorded any recognition by the Indian government, a 'dual policy' (Norbu 2000: 275) appeared to be operating (wherein some sort of Indian involvement in, and support to, the resistance movement, was in place), which was clearly a source of suspicion and annoyance for the PRC and a major irritant in the relationship. The Afro-Asian Conference in Bandung in 1955 in retrospect constitutes both the high point of the post-colonial Asian resurgence and the emergence of competitive strains in Sino-Indian relations, especially in terms of taking on leadership roles in the Afro-Asian world. Nehru certainly ended up with a degree of ambivalence regarding Chinese intentions (Jansen 1966). This could have played some part in his subsequent stand on the boundary dispute. Growing tensions in the latter half of the 1950s brought an end to the limited, but political aspect of the relationship, which was based on the centrality of the India–China relationship in the future development of Asia and the common desire to resist imperialism in its various forms.

The 1962 Border Conflict and Beyond

There is a tremendous profusion of writings, documentation, and analysis of the events that led up to the 1962 conflict—scholars differ in their assessments of its origins and the general perception is still characterized by a less than adequate grasp of the crisis in its entirety. The dominant narrative in India continues to stress Chinese irredentism and betrayal whereas the Chinese account puts the blame at the 'forward policy' adopted by India, which sought to unilaterally alter the status quo. Some Western accounts also accept the latter and highlight Indian intransigence in negotiations to resolve the dispute. The letters and memoranda continuously exchanged between the two governments right up to 1962, revealed differences not just on the boundary but in their worldview, their attitude to international law and to the sanctity of colonial treaties. These differences eventually emerged as irreconcilable contradictions. As Nehru told Parliament in April 1960, 'if data differ, if inferences differ, arguments differ, if the basic facts are different, then there is no meeting ground at all' (Nehru 1961: 396–8) Border clashes erupted frequently. China's concerns vis-à-vis the Soviet Union were building up and trouble within Tibet was gathering pace. So when in late 1961, India embarked on a proactive policy to set up its posts in what it considered its territory, but were north of the then Chinese positions, the Chinese responded swiftly. They successfully pushed back the Indian troops south of the MacMahon Line in the east, seized control of Aksai Chin in the west, and then withdrew after declaring a unilateral ceasefire. Ambassadors were recalled and the curtains came down on the fraternal friendship—which in any case had begun to fray—by the end of 1962 (Acharya 2008).

In retrospect, the sterile hiatus following the war could be best described as a situation of 'cold peace if not cold war'. The post-1962 period also saw the PRC readjusting its policy vis-à-vis the Indian subcontinent, which was essentially aimed at establishing

a special relationship with Pakistan. The Indo-Pak wars of 1965 and 1971 provided the opportunity for the Chinese to show their solidarity with Pakistan—not only did they supply military equipment but they also threatened to open another front on the Sikkim border. No actual intervention took place in either case. It may be recalled that the 1960s was also the period of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution in China, when the domination of ultra-left factions led the Communist Party of China (CPC) to 'export revolution' by intervening in the domestic politics of various states, including India. China also supported self-determination for the people of J&K (Jammu and Kashmir) and backed insurgencies in the north-east and the Maoist movements in India, which still lingers in Indian memories.

In 1969, the Chinese and Soviet troops clashed along the Ussuri River, accelerating the pace of Sino-American rapprochement, transforming great power relations, and inaugurating a period of realignment in international relations. The 1970s witnessed two sets of triangular dynamics—US–USSR–PRC and PRC–India–Pakistan—which further complicated Asian geopolitics. Subcontinental dynamics were largely shaped by two events: the PRC signed an agreement on nuclear cooperation with Pakistan and India began moving closer to the Soviet Union, with a Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Cooperation in 1971 in the shadow of the Bangladesh crisis. Nonetheless, in late 1969, the then Prime Minister India Gandhi took some tentative steps towards re-establishing ambassadorial ties (for which she was criticized in the Indian Parliament). Overtures from India in 1974 were stalled once again with the merger of Sikkim in India, which was denounced as 'naked annexation' in the Chinese media.

The fundamental stance of the Janata government, which came to power in 1977, was that unless the boundary dispute was sorted out, no meaningful relationship with China could be established. But it did make attempts to reach out to the China, which was emerging from the shadows of the Cultural Revolution. The then Indian Foreign Minister A. B. Vajpayee paid a visit to China in 1979 and met Deng Xiaoping, who urged the opening of a new chapter in their relationship. This visit had to be cut short as the Chinese forces attacked Vietnam during his visit.

The Path to Normalization

The reinstatement of ambassadors imparted regularity to the official/bureaucratic process of exchanges. Thereafter, visits and exchanges at a functional level, in what have been traditionally seen in international relations as areas of low politics—culture, trade, economic linkages, exchange of students, academicians, sportspersons, etc.—gained momentum. Simultaneously, both sides communicated to the other their respective approaches to resuming talks as regards the disputed boundaries. An important intervention came from Deng Xiaoping in 1980, when in an interview to an Indian journalist, he outlined a proposal that subsequently came to be known as the 'package deal'. The Indian leadership did not respond to this offer. The decade of the 1980s was peppered by

several high-level visits to and fro; negotiations went on apace, amid a gradual broad-basing of contacts, with both sides affirming that there was 'no fundamental conflict of interests' and agreements on 52 scientific and technological programmes were signed (Liu 1994: 121–46).

The latter half of the 1980s brought a sea-change in international dynamics: as the Sino-US normalization proceeded rapidly, Gorbachev decided to move Soviet troops out of Afghanistan and mend fences with the PRC. Even as the Soviets were also advising the Indians to bury the hatchet with China, two events once again disrupted the ongoing interactions. In July 1986, one of the most threatening face-offs since 1962 took place between the military forces of India and China at Sumdurong Chu in the eastern sector and in February 1987, the Indian Parliament granted full statehood to Arunachal Pradesh (located in India's north-east and claimed by China). Once again, there were acrimonious official exchanges from both sides. But the desire to move away from the confrontationist path had begun to gain traction within India, and the political climate appeared to favour stepping up exchanges to a higher level without the precondition of boundary settlement.

In November 1988, Rajiv Gandhi became the second Indian Prime Minister to visit China in November 1988—30 years after Nehru's visit—and as he told Deng, 'It is now time to look into the future. I have come to renew an old friendship.' The political breakthrough was a shift from a *sequential* (normalization after resolving dispute) to a *simultaneous* approach. The discussions on the border were also upgraded to higher level of officials with the creation of the Joint Working Groups (JWG), which accelerated the momentum of the boundary negotiations. As a tactical device, it provided some space to rethink and reconsider long-cherished stands and positions, and gradually over the years, to add prophylactics to a potentially serious scenario. It also stirred Indian business interest, and promoted the view that competition between the two need not necessarily be vicious. The agenda of the relationship had begun to broaden considerably, the post-Soviet world virtually imposing the need for a broadly common approach towards the forces, which could endanger the political and economic interests of the modernizing and industrializing countries. With the breakup of the Soviet Union, the PRC moved quickly to formalize its frontiers with the newly emerged states in Central Asia and the 1990s witnessed the conclusion of a number of treaties and agreements with almost all its bordering states—a fact that must have been closely watched by the Indians.

The Chinese Premier Li Peng's visit to India in 1991, 30 years after Zhou Enlai's visit of 1960, reaffirmed the desire of stabilizing their relationship and thereby the neighbourhood. The first Indian presidential visit took place in 1992 as also a first visit by an Indian army chief. Two major agreements were signed—one in 1993 (Maintenance of Peace and Tranquillity along the Line of Actual Control) and then in 1996 (when the Chinese President Jiang Zemin visited the subcontinent—Confidence-Building Measures in the Border Regions) which provided a positive impetus to the normalization process. This visit also appeared to confirm the Chinese strategy of modifying their overt tilt towards Pakistan to a more balanced approach towards South Asia.

Pokharan II and After

If the 1962 conflict constituted the first major watershed in terms of taking the India–China relationship from one extreme to the other, as well as altering the power equations in the subcontinent, the Indian nuclear explosions of May 1998 can be seen in comparative terms. In hindsight, the letter of the then Prime Minister Vajpayee to the US President, citing China as the reason for the tests appeared to irk the Chinese more. Nonetheless, the decade of developments preceding the tests stood up to the sharp exchanges in the immediate aftermath. Conciliatory statements at the highest levels in India and a visit by the then Indian External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh to China brought the ties back on track. The Chinese reassurance to him about their desire to stay neutral in the Indo-Pak conflict in Kargil, upheld the shift in the PRC's South Asia policy, underway since the mid-1990s. A second significant indication of the developing maturity of the relationship was the fact that when the Karmapa Lama escaped into India in 2000, it did not stall or disrupt the momentum towards improvement.

With the visit of Prime Minister Vajpayee in June 2003, a decisive and rational (philosophically understood) shift was brokered between China and India with regard to the boundary dispute. Special Representatives were appointed on both sides, mandated 'to explore, from the political perspective of the overall bilateral relationship, the framework of a boundary settlement'. This shift was formalized and substantiated during the visit of Wen Jiabao to India, with the signing of an agreement in April 2005 on the 'Political Parameters and Guiding Principles for the Settlement of the India-China Boundary Question'. The Agreements of 2003 and 2005 were, moreover, a fundamental departure from the earlier approaches—a 'course correction', and a logical conclusion to the political initiative begun in 1988. Wen's visit finally yielded China's recognition of Sikkim as a part of India and the Joint Statement announced the establishment a 'Strategic and Cooperative Partnership for Peace and Prosperity' (<http://www.mea.gov.in> and <http://www.mea.gov.in/china-in.htm>).

The Yin and Yang of India–China Relations

The collapse of the socialist bloc and the end of the systemic divide on the one hand and domestic requirements on the other, in conjunction with the deepening forces of economic globalization, provided the necessary impetus for India and China to formulate policies which would reduce tensions in the neighbourhood and allow for greater concentration on the tasks of modernization. Political commitment at the highest level helped the relationship stay on even keel, as well as provided occasions to iron out differences. As they gain greater comprehensive power and status, the question is whether India and China will be fundamentally competitive, or worse, conflict-prone, in the

pursuit of their respective national interests or will they cooperate, not just for mutual benefit, but also in the interests of the stability and prosperity of their neighbourhood and bordering regions? (Sandhu and Yuan 2003).

The yin and yang of India–China relations may be stated in terms of a paradox: on the one hand, there is a visibly expanding and deepening multi-level engagement, and the remarkable increase of trade, and on the other hand the low levels of mutual trust and confidence. The mistrust most noticeably pervades the strategic communities on both sides, resonating in public perceptions as well the Indian media, which interrogate China's actual intentions and stress the areas of competition within a framework of rivalry and conflict of interests. In fact the belief that China would obstruct India's rise as a major Asian and world power has a fairly tenacious hold in certain sections. The 'Strategic Partnership', by implication, affirmed that the India–China relationship had acquired a global and strategic character. Although the Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's somewhat ambitious statement, that they 'can together reshape the world order', conveyed a spirit of mutual accommodation, it is clear that there is also a competitive dimension within which both countries are fashioning their respective 'rise', commensurate with their self-image and perception. Six issues amply demonstrate the manner in which the yin and yang are playing themselves out.

Economic Dynamism

Burgeoning India–China economic ties testify to their growing economic strengths as well as the primacy that is being accorded to economic factors of late. Trade was officially resumed in 1978 and the Most Favoured Nation Agreement was signed in 1984 (*Report of the India–China Joint Study Group on Comprehensive Trade and Economic Cooperation*, 2005: 10). From a mere US$339 million in 1992, trade levels rose to US$8 billion by 2003. In 2004, India became China's 11th largest trade partner and the largest in South Asia when trade levels climbed up to US$13.6 billion, representing an increase of 79.1 per cent over the previous year (*Report*, 2005: 10). By 2008, upward revisions of annual targets had ceased to generate any surprise. The trade target of $20 billion by 2008 was reached two years ahead of schedule, as was the revised target of $40 billion by 2010. Around $60 billion worth of trade was reached by 2010 and by 2015, the $100 billion mark is expected to be crossed. Amazingly, the India–China trade in goods was the world's fastest-growing trade during 2000–12, surpassing, in 2009, India's trade with its then largest trading partner, the United States (which increased only by 23 per cent compared to 29.7 per cent with China)

Analysts, however, highlight two drawbacks: in terms of product composition, the Indian export basket is still extremely limited, comprising mostly primary products, and since 2005–6, we see a continuous and rising trade deficit in favour of China. India has consistently demanded that China give greater market access to Indian pharma and IT sectors (two areas where India is competitive) and there is undoubtedly urgent need to restructure India–China trade relations. Hitherto, security concerns have limited the

possibilities of Chinese investment, though the extent of Chinese presence and operations has been described in a recent publication as 'Asia's best-kept secret' (Gupta et al. 2014: 1). Few would contest that Indian infrastructure, as also its manufacturing sector, are the biggest stumbling blocks in its growth story—a clear strategy has to be framed soonest, for bringing in Chinese investment and the undoubted expertise of the Chinese firms and corporations, taking on board concerns about training Indian labour and the setting up of production bases. The proposed Free Trade Area (FTA), putting together the markets of two of the most populous nations in the world would be even bigger than the current FTAs such as the European Union, NAFTA, ASEAN, APEC, etc. It is estimated that within the next decade, India and China will be among the ten most important bilateral trading relationships in the world.

The Territorial Imperative

A rather paradoxical situation characterizes the boundary dispute. There is a justifiable satisfaction that since the 1993 and 1996 Agreements, the border has been entirely peaceful. The 2003 Agreement upholding a political understanding on the question and the well-crafted parameters and guidelines of 2005 should have logically led to an early settlement. Nine years later there are no signs of an early breakthrough. Changing the de facto status quo into a de jure boundary could have sorted the matter (indeed that had been the Deng 'package deal' mentioned earlier). But the Chinese claims to Arunachal Pradesh—India's easternmost state—goes counter to the 2005 Guidelines agreeing to respect populated areas. Furthermore, the lack of clarity regarding the alignment of the Line of Actual Control has led to a rising number of transgressions over the past few years. These have in turn led to a useful—and necessary—array of mechanisms: flag meetings, border personnel meetings, hotlines between commanders, and from 2014, it was clear that the approach had shifted from arriving at a speedy settlement to border management, with the signing of a Border Defence Cooperation Agreement. A strategic dialogue, a defence dialogue, and joint military exercises have also been added to the bilateral profile. And yet, the transgressions—which occur very frequently—vitiate the atmosphere, adding grist to the mill of conflictual scenarios (Garver 2001). Beijing's practice of stapling visas on the passports of Indian citizens from Kashmir or Arunachal Pradesh is a further source of exasperation and strong official protests are lodged or the visits in such cases are cancelled. Given the range of mechanisms to manage such crises, it is highly unlikely that force or violent means would be used—the April 2013 incident in which the Chinese forces had set up tents inside Indian territory, is a case in point, but the transgressions are a source of tension and tend to influence public perception negatively.

The Sino-Pakistan Alliance

Arguably, it is the Sino-Pak alliance and their military ties, both in the conventional and nuclear aspects, that generate greater mistrust within India. The present Chinese

position is that whatever cooperation there might have been between the two states earlier, it is clearly a thing of the past and in any case, such cooperation is not directed against any third country. Indian policy-makers, however, continue to be concerned about the range of conventional military sales, China's construction of the Gwadar Port, and in particular, China's violation of the NSG rules to supply civilian nuclear plants to Pakistan. Above all, Chinese presence and infrastructure building activities in the territory ceded to China by Pakistan in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, have generated serious concerns in India (Garver 2001).

Chinese worries about separatist and terrorist groups in Xinjiang and their support bases in Pakistan, as well as the volatility within Pakistan, have however begun to induce some rethinking in China, though it is not yet clear whether they see it as a point of convergence with India. However, their efforts to manage the terrorist threat in collaboration with Pakistan is not paying much dividend. The mutual distrust between India and Pakistan makes the situation a lot worse than it needs to be. With gradual and further improvements in the India–China equation, Pakistan's relevance as a counterweight in China's balancing strategy is likely to come down. Better India–Pakistan relations would serve China's interests far more effectively, and in the short to medium term, India can at best hope that such positions as China might take, do not endorse Pakistan's maximalist position on the issue of Kashmir.

Expanding Ambit: From the Bilateral to the Global

China's rise and India's emergence is by no means on the same page—but their growing global footprint has inevitably led to a gradually expanding dialogue on a range of international issues: international terrorism, multipolarity, energy security, Iraq, North Korea, Afghanistan, UN reforms, globalization, etc. Joint-stands on some critical matters, such as the WTO and the unbalanced international economic order, environmental issues, human rights, reform of the United Nations, and disarmament are also gathering momentum. Both are acquiring more prominence in trilateral (India–China–Russia) and other multilateral platforms such as the BRICS (Brazil-Russia–India–China–South Africa). A gradual reorganization in global economic and political power is taking shape and to varying degrees, both China and India are contributing to this process (Frankel and Harding 2004). This enlarging interaction is being increasingly grounded in a framework of accommodation where possible and cooperation where necessary—and an unambiguous understanding that only such a framework would facilitate the advancement of their respective interests.

Regional and Subregional Cooperation

Economic globalization has been paralleled by the growth of a qualitatively different and intensified economic regionalism in world affairs. By the mid-1990s, virtually every country can be said to have become part of some regional grouping or the other. Asian

regional groupings in the twenty-first century have proliferated, allowing multiple understandings of and approaches to development and modernization and newer forms of collaboration, often grounded in cultural affinities. China's regional profile is certainly very complex and over the last decade it has enmeshed its economy with numerous regional and subregional ventures whereas India's story with regionalism has yet to take off. Its Look East policy since 1991—largely a reaction to the increasingly dominant and dominating role of the PRC, has yet to aquire a cohesive dynamism—though some headway has been made with ASEAN. China has an observer status in SAARC while India has an observer status in SCO, though recent developments point to India's membership being realized in the near future. Questions naturally arise as to whether these regional forums would become arenas for the India–China competition and/or rivalry. Various studies have pointed to the tensions stemming from India's objectives of an exclusive sphere of influence and Chinese quest for a larger role, India's hesitation in responding to China's proposals for regional and subregional cooperation and India's expanding footprint in South-East Asia and Chinese concerns. The fact is that whether it is the South-East, Pacific, South, or Central Asia, the two natural big regional players are India and China. Both will increasingly venture into these areas, pursuing their respective interests and objectives and it would be naïve to expect them not to compete (Raja Mohan 2013), but the imperatives for cooperation are certainly getting stronger (Moritz 2011).

Both India and China can bring different strengths to the regional organizations which are increasingly defined by 'complex interdependence' and 'multilateralism'. The Asian regional developmental discourse echoes with themes of 'common goals' and 'cooperative prosperity', cooperative ventures are burgeoning and there is increased mobility of a variety of skilled and unskilled labour. A new kind of subregionalism—subregional economic growth centres—has emerged which effectively exploits geographical advantages and aims to speed up the process of development of backward areas and regions. The new proposed quadrangle between north-east India, south-west China, Bangladesh, and Myanmar has been a substantial step forward on the part of the four countries involved. But it would, however, require consistent and concrete steps to make it a success. Studies have demonstrated that '[O]pen regionalism and integration between ... the world's two largest developing countries in trade, investments and infrastructure development can foster outward-oriented development and economic and social benefits that could result in poverty reduction' (CESIFO 2005).

The US Factor

India and China have attempted, with varying degrees of success, to take advantage of the flexibility afforded by the post-Cold War environment, to have multi-dimensional engagements with all major powers. The investment/technology need of both has also enhanced the importance of strong ties with the advanced West. In this context the role of the United States—as the sole superpower—acquires a special significance. The

United States and China have experienced a longer period of close politico-strategic cooperation, and since the end of the bipolar world, the United States has been firmly in the centre of Chinese strategic calculations and considerations. They have had a 'strategic partnership' since November 1997 but there are elements of both 'contention' and 'collusion', 'containment' and 'engagement'—or 'congagem', which have at times revived memories of Cold War hostilities. India too, had been moving closer to the United States, particularly since the late 1990s. Indo-US civilian nuclear cooperation has also raised questions on the nature of this proximity and implications for the autonomy of Indian foreign policy. In the current scenario, the US response has been two-pronged: on the one hand it has sought to deal with China's 'rise' by accomodating it as a responsible stakeholder in the globalizing world order, and on the other attempted to promote a strategic partnership with India which could constitute the classic counterweight. Exploiting the 'communist' China and 'democratic' India divide, as also their strategic mistrust, appears to undergird the logic of the Obama adminstration's 'pivot to Asia'.

From the Indian perspective, the triangular dynamic rests on seeing the United States as a natural ally on the one hand, and China as a partner in building a multipolar world on the other. This is paralleled by Indian apprehensions about drawing too close to the former and provoking China, or the realization of a G-2. But Sino-US relations as well have entered a complex phase since the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century and the US 'pivot to Asia' is likely to set off another strategic shift in the near future.

No political cooperation between India and China—either at the global or regional level—will take off in any significant fashion, or last very long, if it emerges from a non-understanding or non-appreciation of each other's relationship with the United States. An exclusive focus on the contradictions and problems that crop up from time to time in these relationships have led one to overstate the significance of 'strategic alliances' that are consequently mooted. Indian reaction to the Sino-US collaboration and dialogue in the past has displayed a high degree of uneasiness and even umbrage. Similarly, the PRC's apprehensions about India becoming a willing partner (or tool) of the Americans in containing China, could have a negative fallout. Both India and China would have to take full cognizance of the relationship of each with the United States (and the West)—neither in zero-sum terms nor as a hurdle in political cooperation amongst them.

Conclusion

This rapidly enlarging relationship unfortunately rests on minimal people-to-people exchanges, appallingly low levels of mutual awareness, and a glaring communication and knowledge deficit. The asymmetrical situation and therefore the strategic gap that defines the India–China relationship at present, have certainly narrowed India's options in dealing with China. The hardy perennials in the relationship—the disputed boundary and the Pakistan factor—will necessarily intrude into the efforts to anchor

the relationship into a firmer economic base. The question is whether the two countries can steer the relationship forward on parallel tracks—the disputed issues being discussed in the frameworks devised since 2003 and in the spirit of mutual adjustment and mutual accommodation, while the agenda for cooperation is decisively pushed forward on the development and modernization path, given that there is a whole world of common agendas and common interests—from 'zero tolerance to terrorism' at one end to cooperation in space technology at the other—that can serve to bring them together. Alongside, it will need to accelerate its military modernization programme.

The strategic transition unfolding in Asia—the rise of China and the US pivot—will need deft handling. No less adroitness would have to be demonstrated in the context of the Chinese big picture. There is certainly some very interesting and innovative thinking that has gone into China's strategy of recasting the historical Silk Roads. This vision, backed by the formidable Chinese economic power, is gradually encompassing wider and wider swathes of Asia, and taking the lead in formulating a comprehensive framework for a multi-dimensional engagement with and in Asia. India will require much creativity and flexibility in fashioning a suitable response.

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CHAPTER 27

INDIA'S POLICY TOWARD PAKISTAN

RAJESH BASRUR

THE term 'intractable rivalry' captures the flavor of the India–Pakistan relationship over the decades since the two countries became independent of British rule in 1947 (Ganguly 2002; Paul 2005). The bitter Partition that separated them at the time was marked by mass migration amidst horrendous violence as Muslims fled to Pakistan and Hindus and Sikhs to India in the millions. The tragedy remains alive well over half a century later, compounded by the persistent hostility between the two countries. The chief—though not the only—bone of contention between them remains the hapless land of Kashmir, divided by the war that broke out between them in 1947 and still the focal point of their mutual distrust. That first war (1947–9) was followed by two more in 1965 and 1971, a fierce but localized episode of armed combat in 1999, and a series of crises, notably in 1986–7, 1990, 1999, and 2001–2.

From the standpoint of foreign policy-making, how well has India managed this difficult relationship? Hindsight is easy to trot out, of course, but it is also valuable in providing lessons for the future. At one level, it could be argued that the relationship has been managed reasonably well given the fundamental contradiction between India's status quo-ist approach to Kashmir, which lies at the heart of their conflict, and Pakistan's determination to alter the status quo and obtain Kashmir. At another, Indian policy-makers' inability to find their way out of the difficulty reflects the constraints imposed by major policy choices. One such choice was made in the early years when the Indian leadership under Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru chose to opt for a set of 'independent' strategic and economic policies that congealed into 'non-alignment' and 'self-sufficiency'. This combination left India militarily and economically weak and unable (among other things) to counter Pakistan's sustained bid to wrest Kashmir by one form of power politics or another. A second and later series of choices was the tendency to slip back into the mentality of the Cold War era and the failure to anticipate the consequences of Pakistan's acquisition of nuclear capability by the mid-1980s.

The literature on the India–Pakistan conflict is not encouraging—few are optimistic that the 'intractable' and 'enduring' rivalry might be on the wane (Cohen 2013; Paul 2005). A careful scrutiny offers ground for a more positive though qualified view. The sources of conflict between the two countries are gradually diminishing; and India's policy of seeking negotiations despite what it sees as unreliable responses has the potential, if carefully calibrated, to yield dividends as the strategic landscape undergoes slow but significant change.

The chapter begins by outlining the sources of conflict and the policies India adopted during the first decades after independence, pointing to some of the deep contradictions that made it difficult to tackle a tough and determined adversary. Post-1991, it will be shown, Indian policy underwent significant adjustment that enhanced its economic and military capacity, yet came to be bogged down by the detritus of past preferences and by its inability to respond appropriately to a nuclearized environment it had not fully anticipated.

The First Decades: Managing an Intractable Conflict

The Sources of Conflict

There are numerous reasons for the sustained antagonism between India and Pakistan. The most deeply embedded of these are their mutually exclusive identities and the influence of domestic politics.

Identity: The 1947 Partition arose from contrasting conceptions of national identity to which both nations continue to cling (Singh 2013; Varshney 1991). India under Jawaharlal Nehru espoused a secular identity which sought to embrace its diverse religious and other social groups. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, who led the movement for the creation of Pakistan, sought political space for Muslims rather than an Islamic state. These identities were by no means firmly established and both were conscious of their vulnerabilities as they tried to build new nation states. The tug of war over Kashmir essentially represented—and still does—the contest between these identities, with Pakistan claiming ownership of Kashmir because it is a Muslim-majority territory and India making its own claim for precisely the same reason. Both, conscious of their internal diversity, feared that the loss of Kashmir would set in motion a process of political disintegration. But while India was relatively status quo-ist, Pakistan tried hard to alter the status quo. India was content to retain its portion of Kashmir without making serious efforts to change the situation on the ground because its control of the Kashmir Valley, a Muslim-majority area, allowed it to retain its claim to being a state which can accommodate Muslims. In contrast, Pakistan, always vulnerable and rendered even more so by the breaking away of Bangladesh in 1971, found the physical alienation of

Kashmir deeply hurtful and tried repeatedly to extract the territory from India by force and by diplomacy. Nowhere was the intensity of the symbolic contest more graphically illustrated than in the prolonged military struggle for the icy wasteland of northern Kashmir's Siachen glacier, where a hostile geography exacted a far larger human toll than sporadic fighting from the early 1980s.

Political systems: The identity issue surrounding Kashmir is closely related to the larger problem of the two political systems. Identity is not as straightforward as it is often made out to be. Anthropologists know that ethnic groups are not simply 'etic' or empirically defined aggregations of people with common physical or cultural characteristics, but are more properly 'emic' or self-defining (Eriksen 2002: 11–13).[1] An individual's sense of affinity with a group is defined externally by the group's separateness from other groups and internally by a sense of belonging arising from meaningful participation in the life of the group. Given that a large group is almost always diverse, participation in its collective life (doing) is essential to identification with it (feeling) (Verkuyten 2005: 50–4). At the level of society and the state, this means that a voice in—and therefore a positive contribution to—social and political life is an essential prerequisite for the development of a strong sense of national identity. If the external component of identity is not adequately balanced by the internal, there is an inbuilt tendency to reinforce identity in opposition to a collective external 'other'.

The internal weaknesses of both countries made them prone to consolidate their identities with regard to other states. The Indian post-colonial state sought to protect itself from the West, especially the United States, while Pakistan did likewise with India. Neither was internally stable. The apparent dominance of Nehru's Congress Party was quickly revealed to be superficial and India's democracy was subject to severe pressure under his daughter, Indira Gandhi, whose effort to personalize the political system culminated in the declaration of an Emergency (June 1975 to March 1977). India recovered quite quickly from the setback and its electoral process and democratic institutions took root over the years. Nevertheless, numerous secessionist movements made it vulnerable to the possibility of at least partial disintegration and, from this standpoint, sensitive about the potential loss of Kashmir.

In contrast, Pakistan faced more severe difficulties. Grafting a 'fundamentally non-territorial vision of nationality' on to a physically bounded space without the benefit of a history was hard enough (Gilmartin 1998: 1081). To attempt it in an ethnically divided society demanded a Herculean effort and neither the leadership (after the early demise of Jinnah and Liaqat Ali Khan) nor the institutional framework for this was available. As a result, the country came to be dominated by the military (Haleem 2003). The army and the mainstream political parties failed to bring enduring stability, their tensions instead providing political space for Islamic extremism and a 'culture of jihad' (Stern 2000). Thanks to its fractured polity, Pakistan was unable to develop the inner confidence that would have permitted a more sanguine approach towards India, especially towards Kashmir. Besides, as its army became increasingly entrenched in Pakistani politics, it developed a vested interest in sustaining hostility with India in order to justify its dominance.

Pakistan's inner turbulence and its determination to complete the task of Partition, as it were, by obtaining control over Kashmir thus became the centerpiece of Islamabad's strategy. India, itself wracked by substantial problems of internal rift, economic stagnation, and external threat (from Pakistan as well as China), sought to respond by means of a combination of approaches.

India's Policy Efforts

The options available to India in responding to Pakistan's revisionist policy may be outlined as follows: defeat, contain, negotiate, and concede. The last was not acceptable; and policy-makers sought to employ the remaining three strategies over time with varying results.

Defeat: From the beginning, Pakistan was driven by a strong desire for parity of status, which in turn strengthened its resolve to challenge what it saw as Indian hegemony (Paul 2014: 94–126). Given the difference in size between them, this was something India never quite understood. India's resort to war was both reactive and proactive. Pakistan, though the weaker state, took the initiative immediately after independence in 1947 and again in 1965. India's relative weakness was revealed by its failure to win a decisive victory on both occasions. In 1971, though the origins of war lay in an internal crisis of Pakistan's own making, India was proactive in aiding the breakaway movement in East Pakistan and followed up with a military victory that helped create Bangladesh. The defeat made Pakistan cautious, but also led to an accelerated effort on Islamabad's part to develop nuclear weapons, with painful consequences for India. By the mid-1980s, Pakistan had acquired nuclear capability, thereby nullifying the war option for India.

Contain: A policy of containment has two main facets: direct military deterrence and indirect power balancing with the support of other powers. In both respects, Indian policy was hamstrung by significant limitations. As a military power, post-colonial India remained relatively weak for the initial decades. This was evident not only from its lackluster performance against Pakistan, but also its decisive loss to China in 1962. As a result, Pakistan was not deterred until 1971. Besides, while India consciously tried to avoid alliances, Pakistan was quick to bolster its position by means of alliances with the United States and China. In addition, it was able to exploit India's failure to set its own house in order. In the 1980s, Islamabad began exercising the 'asymmetric option' by providing support for a militant secessionist movement in the Indian province of Punjab. From the mid-1980s, Pakistan's acquisition of the atomic bomb enabled it to raise the stakes, especially after the rise of a militant independence movement in the Indian-held portion of Kashmir known as Jammu and Kashmir or J&K (Chalk 2001; Kapur 2007; Swami 2004). After the Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests of 1998, India found itself increasingly straitjacketed as Pakistan stepped up its support for *jihadis* occurring on its own soil. In 1999, Pakistan also attempted to coerce India by sending its troops in civilian garb to occupy large tracts of land on the Indian side of the Line of Control (LoC), which officially divides the two forces. The Kargil crisis, or 'war' as it is

sometimes known, and a series of major *jihadi* attacks on Indian targets clearly showed that Pakistan could not be deterred. Following a *jihadi* attack on India's Parliament in December 2001, India shifted its containment strategy to compellence by threatening limited war, but the war option was not a viable one and, after a brief and partial policy retraction, Pakistani support for cross-border terrorism was renewed. The stalemate continued subsequently, with India's incapacity exposed when Pakistan-based terrorists launched a commando-style attack on Mumbai in November 2008, killing 160 civilians.

Negotiate: From the beginning, Indian leaders recognized that the only viable solution to the tussle over Kashmir would have to be a negotiated one. Initially, Nehru was amenable to a plebiscite in Kashmir, but the war of 1947–8 more or less killed the option. India's negotiating strategy over the years underlined its status quo position on Kashmir. The first war ended with India agreeing to divide Kashmir, at least as a temporary arrangement; and India eschewed territorial gains in the 1965 and 1971 wars. But India's willingness to make a deal and limit its demands appears to have been interpreted as a symptom of weakness. Moreover, Pakistan's deep internal fissures made it difficult for its leaders to abandon their revisionist stance; nor was it in the army's interest to do so. The failure of the Indian negotiating strategy was dramatically evident in the Kargil crisis, which erupted barely three months after Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee traveled to Lahore to initiate what was thought to be a breakthrough in the relationship.

On the positive side, India's readiness to persist with negotiations showed signs of paying off when, following the two military crises of 1999 and 2001–2, Pakistan's military leader, President Pervez Musharraf, began responding in earnest. The comprehensive dialogue that followed came close to a major 'deal' (though its content remains unclear); but eventually nothing came of it as Musharraf's political fortunes plummeted, taking the putative deal with them. Subsequently, with Pakistan's political landscape in some uncertainty as the army retreated from the forefront of politics amidst a civil war against the Taliban on the western frontier, negotiations were revived, but with both sides stepping gingerly on what was clearly uncertain terrain.

Assessing the Strategy

As mentioned earlier, the combination of approaches used by Indian leaders was constrained by the fundamental problem of having to fashion an appropriate policy in relation to a revisionist state. For the most part, the use or threat of use of instruments of war from 1947 to 2002 was reactive; 1971 was the one exception. India's evident military weakness prior to the 1971 war gave Pakistani leaders ground for optimism, even if this proved to be—as one scholar notes—'false optimism' (Ganguly 2002: 7–8). Negotiations were more proactive, but in only one instance (*circa* 2004–6) did the prospects for a settlement look positive and even that may be a retrospective expression of hope as much as a realistic assessment. The factors that sustained the gap between India's status quo-ist approach and Pakistan's challenge to it were clearly two: India's relative weakness and Pakistan's domestic politics. Had India been much stronger militarily at the early

stage of the relationship, Pakistan's capacity to push its agenda would have been weaker. And had Pakistan been internally more stable, its interest in defining itself via Kashmir would have been less powerful.

Of the two factors, the latter was beyond India's capacity to influence. But the power factor certainly was. True, prior to obtaining nuclear weapons, Pakistan still had the option, which it exercised regularly, to bolster its material position by aligning with relatively strong states. During the first phase of the Cold War (from the 1950s to the mid-1970s), it was able to acquire American military equipment (including fighter aircraft and tanks). In the second phase, after the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan in late 1979, it received even more military aid by assuming the role of a frontline state. Through much of the Cold War, the American position on Kashmir was also more sympathetic to Pakistan's claims. China was an additional source of military wherewithal and political support. India, of course, was able to counter Pakistan's strategy by obtaining arms from a variety of sources, primarily the Soviet Union. But the overall effect was to allow Pakistan to maintain a relatively strong position, both militarily and politically, which enabled it to sustain its challenge to India.

In the early years, India took two overarching decisions that proved to be problematic in the long run. Nehru's grand strategy, deeply influenced by the colonial experience, was predicated on maximizing Indian autonomy. Accordingly, he sought simultaneously to keep a distance from the 'imperial' capitalist powers by adopting an autarkic, socialistic economic policy and to avoid entanglement in Cold War alliance politics by adopting a non-aligned stance. Both choices were to have fateful consequences. The first left India with a weak economy that lacked the capital, technology, and dynamism to develop a strong state and the second deprived India of a crucial potential source of political support and sophisticated military prowess. Autarky and non-alignment were neither 'natural' products of the colonial experience nor the foundation of advanced state capacity: on the contrary, major success stories such as South Korea and Taiwan grew out of *not* adopting either. India's own relatively faster economic and military growth after the 1990s is testimony to this. But once embraced, both policies were difficult to shed. Had Nehru taken the tack he consciously chose not to, India would have been launched on a growth path much earlier. Note that the Cold War and the capitalist system were interrelated: the United States was for the most part willing to make major economic concessions to Japan, South Korea, and other Cold War allies by absorbing their exports without demur. In short, had India taken the path suggested, it would have been an 'emerging power' decades before it began to be seen as one. And with a stronger economy, a sounder technological base, and more advanced military capability, it would have been in a better position to contend with Pakistan. Arguably, Pakistan's revisionism might not have retained its persistence for long.

While the argument above is about how India's overall policy might have been very different in tackling a difficult adversarial relationship, the next section looks closely at the basics of the relationship itself and assesses the prospects for a lowering of tensions in times to come.

The Changing Strategic Landscape

India–Pakistan relations reached the apogee of hostility with the crisis of 2001–2. Subsequently, the picture has changed perceptibly in a number of ways that offer some scope for optimism about the relationship, though not necessarily in the short term.

Nuclear Weapons Effects

The advent of nuclear weapons, it seems, had generated the kind of hostility on the subcontinent that is common to nuclear-armed rivals (Basrur 2014). On the positive side, nuclear rivalries also exhibit learning: the contenders discover that the risks associated with these weapons are sufficiently severe to require rethinking about their possible 'uses' with regard to manipulating them for political advantage. Following a series of crises between 1986–7 and 2001–2, New Delhi and Islamabad inched toward compromise (Chari et al. 2007; Ganguly and Hagerty 2005). We have seen that, as a revisionist state, Pakistan had the option to shield itself with nuclear weapons and apply pressure on India through an 'asymmetric strategy'. The strategy did produce the kind of results it aimed to: it brought India to the negotiating table with regard to Kashmir. But it also brought the opposite effect. During the crises that erupted periodically, the two powers had willy nilly to cooperate in order to avoid war. They did so tacitly by limiting their actions (as opposed to their rhetoric) and explicitly by negotiating for an end to the tensions. In 1999, India refrained from crossing the LoC, though this hampered its use of air power, slowed down its counterattack and meant a higher cost in lives lost. Pakistan, still claiming that the intruders who had occupied Indian territory were 'freedom fighters,' did not back up its troops when they were forced into a politically damaging retreat. In 2001-02, India resorted to large-scale mobilization and nuclear signaling through missile tests, but did not take the risk of carrying out its threat of limited war, while Pakistan publicly backed away from support for Kashmiri militants. In both crises, back channel negotiations were initiated and the United States played a mediating role. Clearly, the lesson was quickly learned that rivals with nuclear weapons must cooperate to avoid war. It was scarcely surprising, then, that Indian and Pakistani leaders subsequently made serious attempts to find political solutions though a sustained 'composite dialogue.'

The dialogue brought fresh confidence building measures, discussions over a wide range of issues, and moves to 'soften' the LoC in Kashmir by enhancing trade and transportation links across it (Padder 2012). A breakthrough agreement is said to have been close when Musharraf's political fortunes began to wane and the talks ran out of steam. True, India–Pakistan tensions soon degenerated, but the chief lesson of the near-deal is that the rivalry is not as 'intractable' as it is widely held to be. A future entente is on the cards given the right circumstances and leadership.

Globalization and Economics

Developments in the world economy had a significant effect on India and Pakistan. The key feature of the system was (and is) what is loosely referred to as 'globalization', a process that was prominent by the mid-1980s. The movement of goods, services, and money was growing phenomenally as a result of what Daniel Bell called the 'third technological revolution', an amalgam of developments in electronics, miniaturization, digitalization, and software development (Bell 1989). The prominent features of this globalizing economy included the transnationalization of production and greatly accelerated flows of trade and money. The value of world trade jumped from $244.1 billion in 1960 to $3,846.2 billion in 1980 (International Monetary Fund 1990). For developing countries, the old Third World-ism characterized by autarkic policies was no longer viable: to get ahead, states had to shift to more open and competitive economies (Harris 1986). India entered the brave new world of liberalization reluctantly. A balance of payments crisis forced it to seek a bail-out from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which inevitably compelled it to abandon autarky. Thereafter, its economy shifted gear and quickly achieved a higher rate of growth. In the changed environment, with a new focus on obtaining foreign direct investment, the economic cost of instability generated by India–Pakistan hostility began to be viewed as unaffordable. During the 2001–2 crisis, there was public criticism to this effect (Dikshit 2002).[2] It was brought home to political leaders that the fast-moving world of high technology was unwilling to tolerate the uncertainty arising from regional tensions and the threat of war (Friedman 2002).

Political tensions had long confined India–Pakistan trade to a low level because Pakistan sought to protect itself by keeping India at arm's length. It was only after the 2001–2 crisis was behind them that trade between the two countries began to increase. Along with the growing awareness that nuclear weapons had made confrontation a negative game came the recognition that there was much to be gained through enhanced trade. The opening of trade between the separated portions of Kashmir in 2008 brought mutual economic benefit and a lessening of tension. Talks on a proposed Iran–Pakistan–India gas pipeline were intermittently on, though India dropped out in the face of potential sanctions from the United States. Trade grew significantly from a mere $521 million in 2004–5 to about $2.35 billion in 2012.[3] One recent study estimates that the potential for growth is some tenfold (Mehdudia 2013). Admittedly, trade growth does not necessarily rule out political tensions. The tense relationships between the United States and China and between Japan and China are evidence of this. But it is also true that the India–Pakistan relationship is different: the combination of recurring nuclear crises and economic pressures is unique. Moreover, Pakistan's need for economic recovery was serious. As one Pakistani columnist observed, there is not much to be said for national 'sovereignty' when you are asking for aid to survive a prolonged economic crisis (Zaidi 2013).

While India was not quite a major engine of growth, Pakistani leaders were aware of the opportunities it offered. Not surprisingly, both the major parties, the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and the Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz), or PML-N, were in favor of increasing trade and investment. But internal pressures held up Pakistan's

implementation of its promise to grant India most favored nation (MFN) status despite Pakistan's economic misfortunes and the additional pressure applied by the IMF for the rationalization of economic policies.

Domestic Politics and Changing Worldviews

While Kashmir has arguably been the centerpiece of the India–Pakistan rivalry, there is no need to expect that it will always remain so. As noted earlier, identity has an internal as well as an external component. There is evidence that, though Kashmir remained important to the collective personalities of the two countries, this was slowly changing. India had been more status quo-ist because, for all its defects, its internal make-up as a participatory democracy had steadily consolidated. Despite its recurrent religious, linguistic, and caste conflicts, the Indian polity had gradually evolved into a relatively stable democracy. Notwithstanding its multitude of deficiencies, the Indian political system had been built on the participation of an expanding set of players, gradually reaching down toward the most disadvantaged strata. This engendered the sense of belonging that comprises the domestic element of identity. The Indian *weltansicht* accordingly became a more confident one, to which liberalization and the new vibrancy in the economy added.

The Pakistani state faced greater difficulties and its prospects for evolving a workable democracy were repeatedly disrupted by military rule and by ethnic and sectarian divisions. But there is room for a positive view. The military failed repeatedly to stabilize and develop Pakistan's state and society. President Musharraf was ousted by a powerful middle-class movement that ushered in a new era of democratic governance. While no one should underestimate the country's internal problems, it was not a small achievement that the PPP government under President Asif Ali Zardari and various prime ministers was the first elected government in Pakistan's history to live out its full term, a remarkable achievement amidst an ongoing civil war between the state and the Pakistani Taliban based along the Afghan border. The relative independence of the judiciary added to the sense that Pakistan's governance was moving in a positive direction. This slow but steady movement toward a more broad-based democracy bolstered the internal component of Pakistan's identity and thus begun to reduce the need for the 'India threat' to be the glue of national identity. For the army, the primary security threat was now posed by the Pakistani Taliban. A 2013 Pew survey (which does not focus on sectarian threats) shows Pakistani perceptions of the threat posed by the Taliban and al Qaeda rising after 2010, while the assessment of the threat posed by India remained steady (Pew Research Center 2013).

Indian Policy Options

The range of viable policies available to India narrowed in comparison to the first four decades after independence. While conceding Pakistan's demand for Kashmir

remained politically unfeasible, the military option was also ruled out for all practical purposes. Nuclear weapons powers cannot risk fighting even conventional wars for victory. Accordingly, India's effective policy choices were to contain and/or to negotiate.

Contain: By the turn of the millennium, India was struggling to find a workable option to counter Pakistan's decades-old asymmetric strategy. Having failed to anticipate the costs of nuclearization, Indian policy-makers struggled to find an appropriate response. Among the options aired were 'hot pursuit' of terrorists into Pakistani territory, selective strikes against terrorist camps inside Pakistan, and some indeterminate 'limited war' response to continuing Pakistani backing of *jihadis*. In the wake of the slow mobilization of strike forces in the crisis of 2001–2, the Indian army developed a strategy (officially denied) known as 'Cold Start,' which envisaged limited incursion and holding of Pakistani territory with a view to obtaining a strong bargaining position (Ladwig 2007/08). The strategy was open to question, since Pakistan's military response was not predictable and now included the threat to use tactical nuclear missiles and nuclear-tipped cruise missiles. Meanwhile, India necessarily developed a degree of tolerance to attacks by Pakistan-based terrorists, but left open the matter of what it might do in response to another major attack. The political situation in Pakistan remained ambiguous. The relative longevity of civilian rule did not ensure that the army—with its proclivity for tension with India—was permanently back in the barracks. And terrorist groups like the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), which had not been under pressure while the army fought the Taliban on the western frontier, retained the potential to launch serious attacks on India. The Indian government did not appear to have a policy other than continuing with the old combination of threats and offers to negotiate.

Negotiate: India persisted with efforts to negotiate, though with more caution than before, on the sound principles that one cannot choose one's neighbors and that there is no option but to negotiate in a nuclear weapons environment. But progress was sluggish. Pakistan's unwillingness to grant India MFN status, which it had announced in 2011, slowed the pace of talks over economic cooperation. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's brother, Shahbaz Sharif, attributed the lack of progress to the distrust fostered on both sides by 'security agencies' (Boon and Burke 2014). Indians pointed to the lack of progress on the Pakistani trial of those said to be involved in the 2008 Mumbai attack; Pakistanis said the same with regard to the case involving the 2007 bombing in India of a cross-border train (the 'Samjhauta Express') that had caused the death of 42 Pakistanis.[4] Periodic attacks on Indian civilians and military personnel and repeated bouts of firing along the border added to the tensions. Pakistan was absorbed with the civil war against the Taliban, while India seemed beset by policy lethargy under an increasingly passive Congress-led coalition. Neither government seemed to have the political capacity to overcome domestic problems and push for a breakthrough. Mutual suspicions grew over Afghanistan, which Pakistan viewed as essential for its security, and in which India sought to enhance its strategic position by means of rising levels of aid and investment.

Assessing Indian Policy

India's efforts to contain Pakistan had yielded few dividends till the time of writing (May 2014). As noted, it continued to flag a military option that was unviable, especially after 2002. As a result, it was unable to influence Pakistan's exercise of its asymmetric strategy, which depended entirely on factors within Pakistan. One policy tactic that does not appear to have been explored was the 'symmetric option', i.e. the backing of radical groups fighting the Pakistani state. The obvious criticism that India could not possibly risk Pakistani state failure (which might result in radicals acquiring control of the bomb) is arguably exaggerated. India could have enhanced its bargaining power by encouraging nationalist (as opposed to religious fundamentalist) forces in a calibrated way without seriously threatening the survival of the government in Islamabad. Ironically, there were periodic Pakistani allegations that India was doing just this in restive Balochistan, but these were not taken seriously. Whether such a policy would have worked is a moot point; its absence underlines the lack of policy initiative.

In power terms, India also failed to build a strategic partnership with the United States that would have enhanced New Delhi's position. A decade after the offer of military bases to Washington (in the wake of 9/11), India was attempting to keep it at arm's length by avoiding agreements that would have fostered closer military cooperation, for instance on mutual logistics support and on communications inter-operability. Apparently, India was wary of antagonizing China. But that seems odd, considering that India had little capacity to tackle Pakistan, let alone China. That Indian policy-making still carried the baggage of non-alignment was evident from the appeal of the privately produced document *Nonalignment 2.0*, which was widely circulated following its release in 2012. The authors included a former foreign secretary and special envoy of the Prime Minister, and a retired general who later became military advisor to the National Security Council Secretariat (Nonalignment 2.0 2012). The document, largely a reflection of existing policy, in effect advocated continuity in the grand strategy of yesteryear, though without the autarky component. Nehru's failed Cold War era strategy was not necessarily incongruent in the new era: military alliances are not commensurate with a world of growing interdependence. But the notion that India should keep its distance and avoid entanglement with the United States reflected a certain lack of confidence carried over from the past. A closer strategic partnership with the United States need not have dragged into conflict with China; rather, it had the potential not only to offset Chinese power (which was clearly pulling away from India's), but to put greater pressure on Pakistan—which was dependent on American aid—to be more circumspect vis-à-vis India. As it was, India's efforts to impose pressure on Pakistan through the United States were ineffective beyond a point as Washington had its own agenda—elimination of the Taliban and al Qaeda—in that country and did not want to be distracted from these goals.

Factors beyond India's control favored Pakistani restraint: the 2013 election which brought Nawaz Sharif to power; the lowered profile of the army that had led to Musharraf's departure; and the enhanced prestige of the judiciary—all promised a more

internally stable Pakistan. But successive governments were unwilling to rock the political boat in a situation where the army retained much power and where militant groups like the LeT (now re-labeled Jamaat-ud-Dawa) were quick to mobilize against a deal with India. Indian policy could hardly shape these developments or processes. Yet to shy away from an active effort to pressurize decision-makers in Islamabad was to allow developments inside Pakistan to shape the relationship.

Prospects

The analysis in the preceding pages shows that Indian strategic choices at an early stage made the task of fashioning an effective policy against a difficult adversary problematic from the start. These choices left India a weak power in a world where power is central to ensuring national security. India's difficulties in responding to Pakistan's challenges were a reflection of this. By the time India altered its strategic path and moved toward becoming a major power, Pakistan had shored up its position by acquiring nuclear weapons and was able to persist with its revisionist strategy.

That said, there is room for optimism despite the apparently intractable nature of the India–Pakistan relationship. To a significant extent, the future direction of the relationship is beyond India's control as much depends on events and processes inside Pakistan. Yet it is also true that Indian policy has lacked the thrust that might nudge Pakistan toward a closer relationship. As the stronger and more stable of the two powers, India has the capacity to prod the relationship in a more positive direction. At the grand-strategic level, the tendency to hold on to the mythical advantages of non-alignment which set Indian foreign policy on an unsustainable path early on is likely to make the task of managing India's foreign policy—and especially its *bête noire*, Pakistan—extremely difficult. India is likely to perform better by drawing strategically closer to the United States. At the bilateral level, India needs to come to terms with its own inadequacies and move away from an unworkable reactive posture that has led it to cling to a military response it cannot implement. Instead, the relationship with Pakistan is more likely to stabilize if India supplements its inducements to cooperation with the application of nuanced pressure that incorporates a symmetrical response to Pakistan's asymmetric option. An early end to the South Asian 'cold war' is unlikely, but the prospects for a positive conclusion—barring a 'black swan' event that could bring a sudden shift either way—can be thereby enhanced.

Notes

1. The terms 'emic' and 'etic' are derived from phonemics and phonetics (Eriksen 2002: 12).
2. See also 'War at What Cost?' *Hindu*, January 6, 2002. <http://www.hinduonnet.com/thehindu/2002/01/06/stories/2002010600681500.htm>.

3. The figures for the two dates are taken from separate sources: 'India, Pak Agree on Easing Norms for Cement, Tea Trade', *Times of India*, August 2, 2007 <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/India/India_Pak_agree_on_easing_norms_for_cement_tea_trade_/articleshow/2249954.cms> (accessed August 2, 2007); and 'Trade Flows between India and Pakistan despite Tensions', *Times of India*, August 18, 2013 <http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-08-18/india/41422278_1_cross-border-trade-jammu-and-kashmir-trade-dialogue> (accessed November 15, 2013).
4. 'Samjhauta' = understanding.

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CHAPTER 28

BANGLADESH

SREERADHA DATTA AND
KRISHNAN SRINIVASAN

Introduction

Indian foreign policy towards its neighbors is based on one main imperative: New Delhi wishes its neighbors to keep Indian interests in mind when determining their domestic and external policies. This implies Bangladesh taking no actions that might imperil India at home or abroad. As such, Bangladesh would need to refrain from formal or informal connections that would enable third countries to exercise influence in the Indian subcontinent; eschew any degree of armament that might cause concern to the Indian defense establishment; restrain any domestic or foreign elements that seek to use Bangladesh to cause India harm through violence or other means; keep a wary distance from Pakistan; and , finally, remain neutral on the Kashmir dispute. To reciprocate such goodwill, India would be generous in developmental and commercial assistance; benign in regard to Bangladesh's modest international aspirations; and willing to intervene when absolutely necessary in the interests of stability. Implicit is that in return for acknowledging India's primacy in the subcontinent, and overall cooperative behavior, India will give protective economic and strategic cover to its neighbor.

There is no country integrated more closely with India than Bangladesh in respect of language, ethnicity, and culture. Its location is surrounded by India save for its coastline and a small border of 193 kilometers with Myanmar. The key difference is Islam, and it is this factor that drives the relationship to an unusual degree.

In 1905, primarily to restrain the agitating Bengali Hindus, the British Raj partitioned Bengal on the basis of religion. This lasted only six years, but the Muslims appreciated being dominant in a Muslim-majority province. The anti-partition agitation sowed long-term seeds of hostility between the two communities and led to the creation of the Muslim League at Dhaka. The most horrific communal clashes of the pre-1947 period were at Calcutta and Noakhali. Muslims in East Bengal were delighted to shake off Hindu predominance in landowning, the intelligentsia, learned professions,

and business. Therefore, the main impetus for a second partition, which would this time include Muslim-majority areas in the west, came from Bengali Muslims. In what became East Bengal, then East Pakistan and later Bangladesh, the characteristic of the Bengali Muslim has been the search for self-identity, first from Hindu India and then from Urdu-speaking Pakistan (Uddin 2013).

Four Phases

India's relationship with Bangladesh evolved over three phases determined by developments within that country: its independence in 1971, the period of military rule until 1990, and the subsequent decades of multi-party democracy. Rarely have the Indian government and people united in support of a cause like the Bangladeshi freedom movement during the Liberation War. There was Indian euphoria at the defeat of the Pakistani forces. Great significance was read into the presence of Sikh, Hindu, and Jewish officers at the surrender ceremony, symbolizing the triumph of Indian secularism over Islamic fundamentalism. East Pakistan had separated from the western wing and there was expectation that some provinces in Pakistan itself might secede. This was the death-blow to Jinnah's two-nation doctrine; Indian foreign policy had triumphed, backed up by force of arms. The Americans and Chinese who supported the Pakistanis had been trumped, leaving a compliant and secular Bangladesh, grateful for the Indian sacrifice and support to the cause of liberation. The new nation would never cause Indian strategic concern in the east. In return, India would be unstinting in material and moral support to the new nation.

It was always wishful thinking to imagine Bangladesh a client state, and that Indian magnanimity would be sufficient to overcome its manifold inherent problems. Apart from the devastation of the war, there were the effects of a deadly cyclone in 1970, 10 million refugees, massive internal displacement, famine, and Mujibur Rahman's impetuous maladministration. India supplied food, clothing, medicines, building material, and all manner of consumer items, but no amount of assistance was enough. Having seceded from Pakistan, Bengali nationalism lost traction and the focus returned to religion. Despite Mujib's secular commitment, Islam emerged as the primary national identity of Bangladesh and dependence on countries like Saudi Arabia, whose aid polices are usually linked to Islamic causes, provided a further endorsement. For post-Mujib leaders, Islam was treated as a mobilizing force. As Bangladesh's relations with Pakistan and the Organization of Islamic Conference normalized, India slipped from its role as the unique ally, and the fault lines in Bangladeshi society rapidly re-emerged with the adherents of secularism and Bengali culture and those of Islamization and orthodoxy ranged against each other. India suffered widespread unpopularity and marginalization in the years of military rule that followed Mujib's assassination. From Indian foreign policy's greatest triumph, Bangladesh became its biggest disaster. Like a lover spurned, the Indian government and people reacted first in surprise and then bitter dislike of their erstwhile protégés.

The coup against Mujib was engineered by elements in the army and civil society, supported by the United States, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and China, and began the second phase. Islam was declared the state religion. Dhaka's official policy was to keep India at arm's length and enlist Islamist forces inside and outside the country and big powers like the United States and China for support. This led to opportunities for extra-regional engagement and diluted the ties that it had initially enjoyed with India. By 1990, foreign aid was a defining feature of Bangladesh, for which the country had to appease countries like the United States and Saudi Arabia that had opposed Bangladesh's independence. In the index of leading donors to Bangladesh, India was completely absent. Despite India being the main regional contributor to relief efforts during the cyclone and tidal surge besetting Bangladesh in 1988, its role was played down in Bangladesh to the greatest extent possible. New Delhi riposted by minimal attention to Bangladesh whether in the matter of bilateral issues or Bangladesh's initiative to establish the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).

The third phase began with the ouster in 1990 of military rule and the introduction of multi-party democracy in Bangladesh. The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) under Khaleda Zia stood for Bangladeshi nationalism that was interpreted as synonymous with stridently standing up to the Indian 'domination', and its rival, the Awami League (AL), professed the values of the Liberation War, namely Bengali nationalism, secularism, and socialism. These principles being the same that India espoused, New Delhi instinctively supported the AL led by Mujib's daughter Sheikh Hasina. Both major parties often had recourse to support from the anti-independence party the Jamaat e Islami (JeI), which had revived after its leaders returned from self-exile abroad, during which they had portrayed the Liberation War as a confrontation between India and Islam. Fundamentalist Islamist forces were thus encouraged into the political space, and the nadir for Indian foreign policy was reached between 2001 and 2006, when the BNP-JeI government sponsored rampant terrorist activity in and from Bangladesh, together with vicious attacks on domestic minorities. India accused Bangladesh of ignoring, if not actively promoting, anti-Indian *jihadism* sponsored by al Qaeda, JeI, and its various affiliates together with Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence and Bangladesh's own intelligence agencies.

The return of the Awami League government in the elections of 2009 represents the current fourth phase. The bilateral relationship was transformed from neighbors to partners in growth and economic development. The re-election of the Awami League in 2014 found an echo in India of some the earlier optimism of the liberation period, but this time without unrealistic expectations, and bilateral ties consolidated as both sides embarked on a path that held promise unprecedented in the past.

Relations with Other Powers

India's prime consideration is having the impact in Bangladesh of any other country kept to a minimum. The premise is that Bangladesh's geographical location is of no strategic value except to a country with hostile intentions towards India.

Pakistan

Pakistan is India's natural antagonist in Bangladesh and is the opposite of what India stands for. Pakistan cannot be wished away; it is as central to the Bangladeshi's orientation and search for identity as is India, and from the Indian foreign policy viewpoint, consequently represents a factor to be overcome. Like India, Pakistan's ties with Bangladesh over the decades have swung from intimate to hostile depending on the authority in power in Dhaka, but being 2,200 kilometers distant, Pakistan has obvious limitations on the resources it can deploy. It is no coincidence that the two major political formations in Bangladesh are divided clearly on their preferences for close ties with Pakistan and India respectively.

The importance of Bangladesh for India is that it is not Pakistan. As a country with a massive Muslim majority and the third most populous Muslim country in the world, it is of great importance to India's values that New Delhi is seen to enjoy the closest ties with Bangladesh. It is of importance also to Indian foreign policy in respect of Muslim countries elsewhere. Therefore India's relationship with Bangladesh has a greater far-reaching significance than bilateralism alone and any government in Dhaka that inclines to India rather than Pakistan would merit Indian support.

China

The other Indian neighbor of which India is wary in Bangladesh is China. China has none of the advantages of religion, culture, and language that are assets for India or Pakistan, and has no soft power to exercise. It has displayed no overt interest in any strategic advantage in Bangladesh and its activities have been largely economic and commercial, except for the supply of some defense stores and training. China has been engaged in transportation, telecommunications, agriculture, and infrastructural development such as deepening the draught of the Chittagong port and a road to be constructed via Myanmar to Kunming. Nevertheless, India is conscious of the growing influence of China over South Asia generally, and especially in Pakistan, and would like Bangladesh to be extremely circumspect in allowing China to establish itself in Bangladesh.

Myanmar

India's other neighbor, Myanmar, is also a neighbor of Bangladesh's, but with a common boundary of only 193 kilometers. Myanmar's relations with Bangladesh cause no concern for Indian foreign policy. The Buddhist–Muslim violence in the Arakan/Rakhine province of Myanmar has caused 230,000 Muslim refugees known as Rohingyas to enter Bangladesh where they live in abject conditions looked after by UNHCR or NGOs. These refugees have been in Bangladesh since the 1990s, and cause considerable friction between Bangladesh and Myanmar. India sees itself as providing the better example

of a country where its Muslim population sees no need to emigrate, and trusts that Bangladesh will draw the appropriate conclusions.

The West and the United States

As a least-developed country and a leading recipient of foreign aid, it is natural that the developed countries and their NGOs would have a significant role in development activity in Bangladesh. Nearly all European countries, Japan and the United States are thus engaged. None of the aid donors enjoys a high profile in Bangladesh, other than the United States, because it is the world's only superpower, the biggest importer of ready-made garments which are Bangladesh's leading exports, and because after 9/11, Washington's interest increased towards a country that was Muslim and very poor, thereby matching the criteria believed to create an ideal environment for incubating terrorism. In respect of relief after natural disasters, such as the cyclone in 1991, the United States played a leading role thanks to its ability to move sea-borne resources, including aircraft and manpower, speedily into the Bay of Bengal. But neither the United States nor any other country has sought to maintain military-related facilities in Bangladesh.

Abiding Indian Interests

India has abiding interests for which it needs Dhaka to extend its cooperation. Irrespective of the character of the governments in Dhaka or New Delhi, certain issues, many inherited from pre-Partition days, will continue to present a challenge to the formulators of India's foreign policy. It is possible that some of these are intractable and remedies can only be of short-term duration, but these problems will arise repetitively and demand attention.

Islamist Militancy and Counter-Terrorism Cooperation

Given the sensitivity and vulnerability of its volatile northeast, which borders on five nations including Bangladesh, New Delhi is conscious of the potential threat if Bangladesh became a focal point of Islamist militancy. Given the linkages of this problem with post-9/11 Islamist activities, and the nature of Bangladesh's relations with Pakistan, this is a sensitive matter for any Muslim country, and curtailment of Islamist militancy would imply some distancing from Pakistan's position. Any government in Dhaka responsive to this Indian requirement would be assured of Indian cooperation.

Immediately upon assuming office in 2009, Prime Minster Sheikh Hasina set up an anti-terror task force to address the problems that had intensified after 2001. The arrests of various retired military officials for their complicity in the transfer of arms through a

fresh probe of the Chittagong arms haul case of 2004 established the linkages between Bangladesh security agencies and militants operating in India. A landmark in relations was reached with Bangladesh conveying an assurance that anti-India activities from its territory would no longer be entertained. Several Indian militants including Paresh Baruah, Arabinda Rajkhowa, and Ranjan Daimary, who held Bangladeshi passports and sponsored terror attacks within India, were apprehended and rendered to India. Of the agreements signed with Bangladesh in 2010, several pertained to cooperation in security issues and Bangladesh implemented various measures to curb Islamist and left-wing extremism, and passed enabling legislation to provide information relating to the financing of terrorism to other countries when so requested.

Secure Borders

An allied question is one of secure borders. By and large, the Radcliffe Award has held good, demarcation carried out, enclaves are to be exchanged and adverse possessions rectified. It would be impossible to seal a border of 4,096 kilometers that is the fifth longest in the world, is porous, and subject not only to cross-border militancy but illegal migration into India and smuggling. India wants Bangladesh to work cooperatively for better border controls. In 2006 India started to construct a border fence at the cost of $1 billion but few believe that any fence could deter terrorists, illegal migrants, or smugglers. The purpose is largely domestic, to persuade the Indian public that some preventive action is being taken.

Land and Maritime Border

Resolving a decades-old border dispute, India and Bangladesh signed an agreement in 2011 demarcating the land boundary and providing for an exchange of 111 Indian enclaves in Bangladesh with 51 Bangladeshi enclaves, involving a total of 24,268 acres where 52,000 people have been living for centuries (Jones 2010). India has been unable to ratify the bill due to the opposition of some political formations in Assam and West Bengal, on the specious grounds that the enclave exchange will result in a national loss of 10,000 acres, and would fuel secessionist tendencies in other parts of India (Kumar 2013).

The basic disagreement in the maritime boundary was with India and Bangladesh differing over identifying the base-line point, leading to conflicting assertions of the Exclusive Economic Zone and overlapping claims to marine resources and offshore drilling rights. Although Bangladesh had conveyed a preference to settle this bilaterally with suggestions that India could agree to a common area where both countries could jointly exploit the maritime resources, New Delhi did not react. The international arbitration under the UN Conference on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) in 2014 later ruled that of the 172,219 square kilometers viewed by India as the disputed area,

Bangladesh would be awarded 106,613. While some viewed this as a major setback for India, Delhi welcomed it and hoped for greater cooperation between the two countries in the maritime domain (Bhattacharjee 2014).

River Waters

The difficulty is to find a modus vivendi between the upper and lower riparian. The guidelines of the Helsinki and Berlin Rules and the UN Watercourses Convention have not been helpful in arriving at bilateral solutions. India is the upper riparian for Bangladesh and upstream uses like dams create downstream anxieties. In the dry season the flows in certain rivers decrease sharply. The issue of water sharing is highly emotive in Bangladesh, a deltaic nation afflicted by alternate floods and droughts, and carries the potential to turn Bangladeshi opinion against India. Other than the Ganga, there is no agreement on any of the other 53 common rivers that flow from India to Bangladesh, the major of them being the Brahmaputra, Teesta, and Barak. The proposed Tipaimukh dam on the Barak and the sharing of the Teesta and Feni remain contentious. Even when these matters are resolved, there will be a large number of other river flows remaining to be negotiated. While India is an upper riparian to Bangladesh, it is the lower riparian for Nepal, Bhutan, and China. River management cooperation between Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, and India could provide flood control, irrigation, power generation and augmentation in the eastern region (Sood and Mathukumalli 2011) and these countries could make common approaches to China, but the prospect of such cooperation is still far in the future.

Transit

Transit of Indian goods through Bangladesh is contentious, though it would lift economic growth in both countries and hold security benefits for India. Apart from the transit fees that would accrue to Bangladesh, this facility could open opportunities to develop as a trading hub with India's northeast, and the economic costs of trade would decrease once trade through rail and waterways started movement. Bangladesh has excellent ports giving access to the outside world for exports from the northeast. India hoped to soften Bangladesh's resistance by permitting it road and rail transit to Nepal and Bhutan across India, but Bangladesh's political suspicions triumph over its economic advantages, and opponents of transit argue about surrender of sovereignty to resist Indian passage to and from its northeast. A tri-nation gas pipeline from Myanmar was one casualty of such opposition. Even if political roadblocks to transit by road, rail, and river were lifted, there are several infrastructural issues that would need to be resolved before the implementation of any eventual transit procedure.

Hindu Minority

At approximately 10 million people in Bangladesh, the Hindu minority community there is the biggest in the world. Being a relatively poor and deprived community, the Hindus are vulnerable in a population that is 90 per cent Muslim, and have frequently come under physical attack with losses of life and property. In a chain reaction, the Hazratbal incident in 1963 led to the Khulna massacre of Hindus, and in 1990–2, rumors of, and then the actual demolition of, the Babri Masjid led to anti-Hindu riots when some of the best-known temples were laid waste (Nasreen 1993). Such sectarian violence has immediate repercussions in India where sentiments favor the Hindu minority and where this issue becomes politicized. With the Indian public highly exercised, it becomes a huge emotional problem and a setback in bilateral relations. Any government in Dhaka acceptable to New Delhi must pay attention to minority rights and protections.

Illegal Migration

The number of Hindus in Bangladesh has reduced by about one half of what it was at the time of independence. Most of those who departed, either voluntarily or driven out by religious bigotry, entered India without proper documentation. But the vast majority of the illegal migrants are Muslims—which further aggravates the adverse perception—who enter India for economic reasons. Illegal migration from Bangladesh has been taking place due to push factors within a relatively poor Bangladesh, along with the pull factors of economic, health, and educational opportunities that India supposedly offers. The steady influx of Bangladeshis to India led to demographic changes in the bordering states, but this phenomenon has now transformed into a larger social problem penetrating far-flung corners of India. Indian political parties have to a great extent connived with legitimizing these migrants for the sake of constructing vote-banks of supporters.

There is no consensus on the exact numbers of Bangladeshis who have entered India illegally. Substantial numbers come without valid documents while others arrive with visas and do not return. Data emanate from several agencies involved in collation but it is impossible to arrive at accurate estimates. The influx could be as many as 100,000 each year and perhaps many more. The total estimate of Bangladeshi illegal migrants in India ranges from 12 million to 18 million, but all these figures are only guesses. According to a recent report of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (Sinha 2013), there are around 3.2 million Bangladeshi migrants settled in India. While those numbers are obviously grossly underestimated, their significance lies in the international acceptance of the phenomenon.

Rising population and the effects of climate change resulting in submergence of coastal lands are likely to magnify this trend in years to come. Therefore action like

population control measures within Bangladesh, efficacy of border control, and bilateral mechanisms are needed to check illegal migration to India. The issue of illegal migration is sensitive in Bangladesh and all its governments categorically deny its existence because it is *infra dig* for them to accept that their people migrate to India for a better life.

After the unrealistic optimism of the early 1970s and the later bitterness of disillusion with Bangladesh, public awareness of the large-scale immigration of low-cost labor from Bangladesh has been the main interface through which most Indians regard Bangladesh with great disfavor, a factor that impedes the development of good bilateral relations. New Delhi would find it a considerable step forward if Dhaka would admit this was a shared problem to which a solution had to be found, but no such move on the part of Bangladesh is likely to be forthcoming.

Defense Equipment

India would like to see Bangladesh's acquisition and deployment of weapons kept to the minimum required for internal security purposes. Implicit in this is that if there was a friendly regime in Dhaka, India would offer security cover to Bangladesh, and would to the extent possible supply the material at friendship prices for Bangladesh's needs. After independence, some equipment was inherited from Pakistan, but much of the weaponry now in use is from China, mainly because of easy payment terms. Discussion is said to be under way for Chinese submarines: this will not be to India's liking. A few aircraft were ordered from the United States after 1990 and some fighters from Russia in the 2000s. The 100,000 strong Bangladeshi army is a leading participant in UN peacekeeping operations. This is welcome to Indian interests because it lessens the possibility of the army entering the political sphere as it has in Pakistan. India wishes to see Bangladesh develop into a Muslim-majority non-theocratic nationalist democracy like Turkey and Indonesia, where the armed forces are not integral to the political structure as in Pakistan.

India and Bangladesh had signed a 'Treaty of Friendship Cooperation and Peace' in 1972 for a term of 25 years that was never invoked and lost its relevance in the post-Mujib period, when defense ties were completely suspended. Military contacts resumed after 2006, with joint military exercises and counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency operations.

Indian Domestic Public Opinion

The cause of East Pakistan's independence from Pakistani rule attracted the full support of the Indian public, which backed not only the armed intervention but the measures to rebuild Bangladesh in the early years. Disbelief and disillusion followed during the last years of Mujibur Rahman's government when civil and military dissidents from

the Liberation War period were reinstated, war criminals pardoned, and relations with Pakistan restored. As India's special status in Bangladesh dwindled, the Indian public was first alarmed by what was seen as blatant lack of gratitude, and then lost interest, the only remaining interface with Bangladesh being the usually unwelcome presence of illegal migrants providing low-cost labor in nearly all parts of India. The intensity of cultural exchanges with Bangladesh, certainly exceeding by far that with any other Indian neighbor, made little impression on the public's general distaste for Bangladesh. The one exception is the state of West Bengal, where many families harbor fond, though inevitably fading, memories of connections with East Bengal, and where celebrations of anniversaries of Rabindranath Tagore and Nazrul Islam, among other events, keep cultural contacts flourishing. Media coverage of Bangladesh closely follows these trends in public opinion.

State Governments

Despite the center's prerogative to conduct foreign policy in India's federal structure, state governments exercise a degree of influence on the center's decision-making process in regard to near neighbors. The state governments of West Bengal and the Indian northeast that border Bangladesh look forward to transit routes being operational through Bangladesh which would lead to a spurt in economic growth. At the same time, they deplore, but can do little about, the illegal migration that has changed the demographic profile and led to a remarkable upswing in the Muslim population. A conference of chief ministers from the northeast in New Delhi in August 2009 stated that infiltration from Bangladesh posed the biggest security threat to the region (Ray 2007: 403).

Indian foreign policy is conducted more smoothly when the border state in question and the center are governed by the same political party, or at least where the two authorities share the same objectives. Such was the case in 1996 when New Delhi and Calcutta together arrived at a 30-year agreement with Bangladesh on sharing the Ganga but not the case when the state government in West Bengal during 2011–14 obstructed an agreement on sharing the Teesta River and the ratification of the bilateral land boundary agreement, leading to accusations from Dhaka that India does not deliver on promises.

Trade and Investment

Due to its big population mainly dependent on agriculture and with limited natural resources, Bangladesh is by far the biggest South Asian market for Indian exports. Total trade has risen from $1 billion in 2001 to $4.5 billion in 2012, of which Bangladesh's share is $0.5 billion. Added to this traffic is wide-scale smuggling across the border, the value of which is reckoned to be of much the same order as the official trade figures. Conscious

of the highly favorable trade balance, India has allowed duty-free, quota-free for nearly all Bangladeshi exports, and sought to integrate Bangladesh's economy with India through the financing of infrastructure projects, private investments in transport and telecommunications, and linking the power grids of the two countries. The beginning of bilateral power trade from 2013 through the 71 kilometer, 400 kv cross-border transmission link between India and Bangladesh capable of transferring 500 megawatt electricity was one of the major commitments fulfilled from the Indian side. However, to close the trade gap, Bangladesh will need Indian assistance in diversifying its export basket and achieving greater competitiveness. However, in the near future Indian exports are likely to rise further, generating Bangladeshi complaints

Constants and Variables

Bangladesh is the most coherent country in India's neighborhood. Nearly all of it comprises one ethnic group, nearly all worship one religious faith, nearly all speak one language. It is nearly surrounded by Indian territory, and the fact that it can identify closely with adjacent India in terms of ethnicity, religion, language, culture, and shared history should make it a natural friend for India. For multiple reasons, quite apart from the traumatic history of its nationhood, in which the Indian people and armed forces played a major role, it deserves the highest priority for Indian foreign policy's hand of friendship.

Nevertheless, Bangladesh and India have experienced a relationship marked by upswings and downturns; opportunities have been lost, and errors committed on both sides through negligence and ineptitude. There have been long periods of mutual indifference and veiled hostility; in happier times bureaucracy has not followed where the political class has bravely ventured. Frustration has frequently been the prevailing mood in both capitals. Bilateral relations have been dependent on the character of the political party in power in Dhaka, and ties have become hostage to the vagaries of domestic party politics in both countries. Indo-Bangladeshi relations directly impact domestic politics in Bangladesh. The BNP suspects any agreement with India as anti-national, and bitter animosity between the major Bangladeshi political formations inhibits the realization of the full bilateral potential. In the process, the fundamentals of the cultural, linguistic, historical, ethnic, economic, and geopolitical imperatives for good relations have often been overlooked and made subject to populism and occasional third-country involvement. A Calcutta-based academic (Mishra 2011) has observed that India should forget history and Bangladesh should forget geography. He was castigated on both sides of the border for this aphorism, but there is truth in this observation.

Bangladesh is the quintessential foreign policy challenge for India. The justification for Bangladesh's political independence from Pakistan, and earlier separation from India, lies in its identity as both 'Bengali' and 'Muslim'. A distinctive Bengali Muslim identity has been forged in a post-colonial secular nationalist setting that can be favorably contrasted with Pakistan because of its relative tolerance, informed by attempts

to preserve the richness of Bengali language and culture in a Muslim country within a context of religious influences over many centuries that included Buddhist, Hindu, and Sufi traditions. There is a continuing search for a Bengali identity that is distinct from India, and a Muslim one that is separate from Pakistan; there is thus a duality of heritage. 'Muslim-ness' is an attribute of Bangladeshi national identity, which distinguishes it from neighboring India, and 'Bengali-ness' distinguishes it from Pakistan (Chowdhury 2013). The two streams of this nationhood, the 'Bengali-ness' and the 'Muslim-ness', eventually and largely have found expression in the two main political parties, the AL and BNP and in the hostile and uncompromising mutual relationship between the two women who lead the parties. The AL is identified with Bengali nationalism, a 'Bengali-ness' characterized by language, literature, and landscape, but with no suggestion of any desire to reunite with West Bengal. For the BNP, its emphasis is on the distinctiveness of East Bengali Muslim culture.

It is not easy to docket present-day Bangladesh in boxes linked to religion or cultural community, because Bangladesh is still a state in the making. It is a country divided by politics, class, and identity. Both India and Bangladesh like to profess that whereas India and Pakistan are real or probable enemies, India and Bangladesh enjoy amicable relations—or rather, would do so if only a few irritants were removed. This is gross over-simplification. In reality, bilateralism is complicated by, and rooted in, Bangladeshi domestic tensions for which it becomes a surrogate and paradigm. The inherent contradictions between the two countries make it resemble a post-Partition contest, the two contestants being Indian-style secularism on one hand, which India would instinctively support, and Pakistani-type conformism on the other. Neither the events of 1947 nor 1971 have resolved this dilemma in Bangladesh. On one side, there are the liberals, who believe their existence as ethnic Bengalis is as important as the faith they practice: and on the other side are ranged the separatist fundamentalists, who cling to the notion of the solidarity of the Islamic *ummah*. For the latter, the break with the Hindu majority of 1947 was more significant than liberation from Pakistan in 1971, but the former see the future of Bangladesh as inextricably linked to developments in India, whether cultural, social, or economic, which necessitate the closest ties with India. But those who derive their motivation from separation mentally leap-frog India, pretend it does not exist, and create the illusion that they can confront India despite being practically an enclave in northeast India.

Further complicating this existentialist contest are other complexes and predispositions at work; that of a small country almost surrounded by a big one, and that of a nation that has a deep sense of victim-hood. Thus it positions itself constantly as a *demandeur*. As a weak least-developed country, the involvement of foreign powers finds a ready response among clients seeking position, status, or money. India is opposed to external influence, but has too often failed to turn Bangladesh's needs to mutual benefit by refusing to discuss common problems. The exceptions to this indifference have been the periods when the Awami League was in power.

It may take generations for the scars of Partition and liberation to heal and a self-confident Bangladeshi identity to grow, but India must bend its policies to influence

a positive outcome of that purely domestic, internal process. Stability and economic progress in Bangladesh are essential for the security and prosperity of India, and especially of the fragile Indian northeast. The redress of Bangladesh's genuine grievances which cut across all party lines would be to India's advantage because none of these issues constitutes a security or economic risk to India. But political will and attention-span are often lacking in New Delhi and the Indian states bordering Bangladesh, even when the bureaucracy has been willing to impart momentum in the right direction—which is not often the case.

Citing spurious political compulsions, India has often allowed short-sighted hard-liners, Hindu chauvinists, and parochial regional politicians, apparently unaware of the grave consequences of a hostile government in Dhaka, to set India's foreign policy agenda towards Bangladesh whereas the rational approach would be to address Dhaka's grievances constructively to bestow stability on any friendly government there, and strengthen cultural and economic exchanges so that people-to-people bonds fortify the cause of the Bengali nationalists. Interlocking economic and transport connections can lead to socio-economic progress on both sides of the border, provided the impediments, political and physical, in Bangladesh are removed.

India's rise to significant world status has given rise to a new self-confidence in foreign policy towards its neighbors, but whether India will eventually succeed in the struggle for the hearts and minds of the Bangladeshis will depend on several factors. Good relations between India and Pakistan will strike at fundamentalist Islamist ideology in Bangladesh and diminish its faith in the camaraderie of the Muslim *ummah*. Stronger ties between India and major powers like China and the United States will have a sobering effect on India's opponents in their constant search for counter-balance against India. Deft handling in India of the problem areas between the two nations would disarm the genuine Bangladeshi nationalists and the habitual anti-Indian propaganda issuing from certain circles in Bangladesh.

There can be no early final conclusion of this a priori tension; it will slowly resolve itself as the subcontinent matures from the trauma of partition and gains more economic progress. Much will depend on the patience and staying power of political will in India, both at the center and in the states bordering Bangladesh, to absorb the frustrations and grasp the existing opportunities to exercise generosity and goodwill towards Bangladesh with non-sectarian sympathy and humanitarian sensitivity. The cooperative framework that characterizes current bilateral relations, if consolidated over the long term, holds out promise for enhanced mutual confidence and benefit.

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CHAPTER 29

INDIA'S NEPAL POLICY

S. D. MUNI

Nepal is India's unique neighbor. The two countries are closely bound together in a complex web of linkages and contiguities that span across civilizational, historical, socio-cultural, economic, geostrategic, and political terrains. The Shah Kings of Nepal (1769–2008) were Sisodia rajputs of Rajasthan. They first established the Gorkha state in 1559 under Driya Shah. Even before them, the Lichhavies of India came to ancient Nepal in 300 AD. They overthrew the Kirantis that ruled the present-day Kathmandu region. If one goes into the Hindu mythology of Ramayan, Lord Ram, the prince of Ayodhya, married the princess Sita of Janakpur, which is a part of modern Nepal. Geographically, India's fertile and densely populated Indo-Gangetic heartland flows smoothly into Nepal's densely populated Terai flatland reinforcing their territorial bonds as one sub-Himalayan strategic entity. While the Nepali rivers flow into India to sustain its agricultural economy, the Himalayan and Indian Ocean monsoon winds shape the climate and weather patterns of the two countries. Like India, Nepal is a dominantly Hindu society (82 per cent of the population according to the 2011 census) with Buddhism and Islam as major minority religions. Lord Buddha was born as a prince (Siddharth) in the Lumbini/Kapilvastu area of Nepal Terai but gained enlightenment in India. The dominant languages of Nepal—Nepali, Maithili, and Bhojpuri etc.—are rooted in Indian languages: Sanskrit, Pali, Hindi, and their regional variations. The people of India and Nepal share commonalities in their attire, food habits, and lifestyles. The two countries are therefore said to be lodged into each other's intestines, each sharing the spillover of turbulence and tenacity from the other.

India's Interests in Nepal

India's interests range from the mundane concerns of protecting its people in Nepal to the lasting stakes in safeguarding and promoting its economic and security interests. These interests have evolved and been defined not only by the parameters of regional and international dynamics in South Asia but also by the socio-economic and political contexts of both India

and Nepal, prevailing at any given point of time. The huge contrast between India and Nepal in their respective territorial spans, demographic dimensions, economic sizes and diversity, and thrust of comprehensive national power (including military capabilities) has weighed heavily on the way India has pursued these interests and Nepal has responded and reacted to them.

Independent India's security interests in Nepal were primarily dictated by its sub-Himalayan and contiguous location in proximity to Tibet. They bore a strong imprint of British legacy where Nepal was used not only to expand the British reach across the Himalayas, to Tibet and China, but also to ensure that Nepali rulers' territorial and political ambitions did not pose any challenge to the British imperial consolidation in India. The imposition of the Sugauli Treaty on Nepal in 1816 after a decisive military victory in two years-long Anglo-Nepalese wars and the use of Nepali soldiers in putting down revolt of the Indian princely rulers in 1857 were typically related to the establishment of the British Empire in India. They also provided strong precedents to influence the future course of India's engagement with Nepal. For instance it was the Sugauli Treaty that forced Nepal not to engage other foreigners (Americans and Europeans) in its economic and strategic affairs, and allow the British to recruit Nepali soldiers. Even today, India is not comfortable with any third country's influence in Nepal and it continues to recruit Nepali Gurkhas for its army, notwithstanding the voices of dissent within Nepal. In 1948, Nepal had also contributed troops to help independent India in its integration of the state of Hyderabad and also to face the situation precipitated by Pakistan's tribal invasion in Kashmir.

India's security interests in Nepal were radically recast soon after independence when in 1949 China emerged as a communist nation and in 1951, militarily occupied Tibet. Unprepared, India had to accept this change and withdraw its presence from Tibet. The security concern was now redefined from 'threat from Nepal' to 'threat to Nepal'.[1] India was forced then to fortify its strategic frontier, covering Nepal, in the Himalayas against an unpredictable and, suspected to be, expansionist communist China. The idea of Nepal being an integral part of India's sub-Himalayan strategic space was reinforced in this context. It was enshrined in the July 1950 Treaty of Peace and Friendship between India and Nepal underlining 'the everlasting peace and friendship' between the two countries.[2] India's first Prime Minister Nehru had no hesitation in accepting that India's security interests had a priority over Nepal's sovereignty and independence. In a speech in Indian Parliament on December 6, 1950, Nehru said:

> From time immemorial, the Himalayas have provided us with a magnificent frontier ... We cannot allow that barrier to be penetrated because it is also the principal barrier to India. Therefore, such as we appreciate the independence of Nepal, we cannot allow anything to go wrong in Nepal or permit that barrier to be crossed or weakened as that would also be a risk to our security.

In the same vein Nehru added:

> Frankly, we do not like and shall not brook any foreign interference in Nepal. We recognize Nepal as an independent country and wish her well, but even a child knows that one cannot go to Nepal without passing through India. Therefore, no

> other country can have as intimate a relationship with Nepal as ours is. (Parliament Debates 1950)

The geographical determinism of India's security interests in Nepal led Nehru to build what came to be called as 'special relationship' with Nepal. This involved guarding Nepal's northern border, modernizing Nepal's defense capabilities and closely coordinating the foreign policy of Nepal. By the latter half of the 1950s, India's mutual security arrangements started coming under severe pressures and were eroded seriously by the end of the 1950s. The proposed foreign policy coordination fell through, the presence of India's military mission in Nepal was withdrawn, and Nepal increasingly opened itself to the outside world including China (Rose 1972; Muni 1973; Thapliyal 1998). Reasons were many and diverse. There arose a strong domestic political resistance in Nepal to these Indian moves with a change in Nepalese monarchy in 1955; from King Tribhuwan to his son King Mahendra, who even as a Crown prince was strongly resentful of India's massive presence in Nepal. He opened up Nepal's external relations and forced India to start winding up specific initiatives in the areas of Nepal's foreign policy and defense matters. The growing presence of the third countries and erosion of its mutual security arrangements with Nepal irritated Indian policy-makers. Regarding the questioning of mutual security arrangements, Nehru wrote on July 6, 1954, to Indian Ambassador in Kathmandu, B. K. Gokhale:

> People in Nepal forget that India is on three sides of the country and the fourth is Tibet ... these people in Nepal, who think and talk mischief are cowards. They should be made to realize, politely but firmly, that there are some things we will not tolerate and we will take necessary action if people misbehave against India ... I am opposed to any withdrawal from our check-posts, or our military mission, or our Trade Agent or our wireless instruments or in any other way. They will have to put up with us even if they do not like us. If we decide to leave any time in future, it will be with dignity and not under threats. (Bhasin 2004: 346–8)

Again on the question of Nepal's expanding relations with China, the United States, and other countries, Nehru expressed his displeasure. In a letter to the then Indian ambassador in Kathmandu, Bhagwan Sahay on September 2, 1956, he wrote:

> I wish to emphasize that, as I once pointed out to you previously, we must reconsider our attitude towards Nepal .. They have not only bypassed us and practically ignored us, but have done so with discourtesy. This is obviously a deliberate attitude to emphasize their own complete independence from us. According to Chou En-Lai Nepalese Government have stated to him that they have exchanged notes with USA concerning such matters as Consular representation, treatment of nationals, etc. We seem to know less about Nepalese foreign relations than foreign countries. (Bhasin 2004: 390)

Despite Nehru's insistence, India could not sustain its security approach towards Nepal. This approach received a serious jolt during the 1960s owing to a clash with

Nepal's internal political dynamics. King Mahendra allowed China and Pakistan to build their presence in Nepal in order to counteract India's pressures for the restoration of democratic order that he had dismissed on December 15, 1960.[3] Not only were the Chinese allowed to build a road connection (Kathmandu–Kodari Road) but the Chinese traders and officials were also encouraged to make their presence in the Terai, in proximity to India's Indo-Gangetic heartland, through Nepal's newly established chain of State Trading Corporation outlets. Diplomatic relations were established with Pakistan and cooperation in various fields was encouraged. King Mahendra's strategy of using China and Pakistan, along with other international players, to ward off political pressures and extract concessions from India continued to be followed by his successors King Birendra and King Gyanendra. King Birendra's quiet approach to China to procure arms including anti-aircraft guns during March–August 1988 in violation of the understanding with India on purchase of arms may be recalled. The tensions between India and Nepal on this issue eventually led to bilateral difficulties in trade and India's support for the anti-Panchayat movement in 1989 (Thapliyal 1998; Muni 1992). King Gyanendra also approached China for arms much to India's displeasure during 2005 when India had stopped supply of arms to Nepal following the King's direct takeover of power in February 2005.

Besides the imperatives of Nepal's domestic politics, India's initial notion of a geographically determined security relationship with Nepal has also been eroded as a result of the growing needs and technologies for connectivity and communications. The Himalayan barrier is being breached by connectivity through roads and other means of transport. Now there is a proposal by China also to link Nepal through the Tibetan rail network. The newer weapon systems like missiles, and now the question of cyber security have considerably undermined the significance of geographical barriers in defense and security calculus.

India's security concerns in Nepal have accordingly become more subtle and mundane. They now relate to the use of Nepali territory to the disadvantage of India, not only by China but any third country and non-state actors. Issues include the use of Nepali territory due to its unique open border with India by cross-border terrorists from Pakistan, cross-border activities of criminal gangs and individuals and anti-social elements like smugglers of both India and Nepal, and the flow of Indian fake currency in India through Nepal. The hijacking of an Indian airlines flight (IC 814) from Kathmandu by Pakistani terrorists eventually ending up in Kandhar (Afghanistan) in Decemebr1999, gave India nightmares. Establishing bilateral measures to ensure that such incidents do not repeat has been a major concern of India since then. India is also constantly battling the flow of Pakistani terrorists and fake Indian currency notes through Nepal.[4] Identifying India's contemporary security concerns in Nepal, a Ministry of External Affairs Note of February 2012 said:

> There are streamlined bilateral mechanisms to address all issues concerning security, including cross-border crime and establishing effective communication links between and along the bordering districts to further facilitate the exchange of

> information. India has repeatedly stressed the need for strengthening the legal framework, in order to counter their common cross-border security challenges. India has also provided liberal assistance to the security apparatus in Nepal in development of infra-structure, capacity building, equipment and training of human resources.[5]

India's economic interests in Nepal have also evolved over the same time as its security interests. For keeping foreign influences at bay, India incorporated a provision in the 1950 treaty to secure a preference over all foreign assistance for the 'development of natural resources' and 'industrial project' in Nepal (Muni 1973: 191).

The most important natural resource of Nepal has of course been water. What initially started as harnessing of water resources for mutual benefit of the two countries has now been extended to protecting and promoting India's trade and investment interests in Nepal. India's first water harnessing projects in Nepal were on the Rivers Kosi (1954) and Gandak (1959). These projects generated considerable controversy as the Nepalese perceived them to be tilted heavily in India's favor (Gyawali 2011; Shrestha 2011). These agreements were revised in 1964 (Gandak) and 1966 (Kosi) to accommodate Nepalese grievances (Jha 2013; Dhungel and Pun 2009). However, a deep cleavage of distrust was created between the two countries in the area of water harnessing and no major project could be undertaken until the 1998 signing of the Mahakali Treaty. Not much movement is visible on the implementation of the Mahakali treaty as yet. Similarly, progress in the area of hydro-power development in Nepal has also been dismal. Out of a commercially viable potential of 45,000 MW of hydro-power, Nepal has hardly been able to develop 600 MW which is not even enough for Nepal's basic requirements. Instead of contributing to India's power needs, Nepal has periodically been buying power from India.

India is Nepal's major trading partner. With a view to reducing its dependence on India for trade, Nepal, during the 1960s and 1970s had politicized its trade policy and a host of incentives were offered to exporters and importers for encouraging trade with third countries. Goods originating from China and Japan (synthetic textiles and stainless steel products) were imported for re-export to India posing a major threat to Indian manufacturers. That phase is now over, but Nepal has a problem of trade deficit, despite free access granted to Nepalese goods into the Indian market. India now accounts for nearly 60–70 per cent of Nepal's total external trade. India also is a major source of investments in Nepal, accounting for little less than 50 per cent of total foreign direct investments into Nepal by 2013. However, due to poor infrastructure and lack of proper protection from internal social and political turmoil, the level of investment is far below its actual potential. A Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (BIPPA) was concluded between the two countries in October 2011 during Nepali Prime Minister Dr. Baburam Bhattarai's visit to India with the purpose of creating a better investment climate between the two countries. This agreement has also run into political difficulties within Nepal.[6]

Policy Dynamics

In pursuance of its perceived security and economic interests, Indian policy in Nepal sought to ensure a stable and cooperative regime. In the context of developments in China and Tibet, Nehru was thinking along political reforms in Nepal's Rana system even when he was negotiating the 1950 Treaty. Writing to Ambassador C. P. N Singh on September 10, 1949, he said:

> Owing to developments in China and very probably a little later in Tibet, Nepal will have to face a very serious problem on the border before very long. Those problems will not be of a military character so much as an invasion of ideas and dangerous ideas at that. This invasion can only be met by internal changes brought about in time. (Bhasin 2004: 79)

Echoing the same thought, he wrote to the Chief Ministers of the Indian States on March 1, 1950:

> The Treaty of Friendship of course, does not mean that we approve of the political or social structure of Nepal at the present moment. Unfortunately this structure is completely feudal and backward and we have been laying the greatest stress during the past two or three years on substantial reforms being introduced. I regret to say that practically no results have been reached thus far in spite of this pressure. (Bhasin 2004: 83)

When persuasion for political reforms failed, India decided to support Nepali popular revolt against the Ranas. This was the beginning of India's active involvement in the subsequent transformational political movements in Nepal. This involvement was driven by India's interest in a stable and progressive political order in Nepal. More often, the Nepali protesters were not only inspired by Indian ideals of democracy but were also active participants in India's anti-colonial struggle and worked with Indian leaders. Between 1950–1 and 2005–6, Nepal has witnessed four major transformational political uprisings: (a) 1950–1: the anti-Rana revolution; (b) 1960: the King's coup against representative democratic government; (c) 1989–90: the 'Jan Andolan-I' people's movement to change Nepal's monarchical Panchayat system; (d) 2005–6: Nepal's 'Jan Andolan-II' against autocratic monarchy. In all four cases, India got actively involved and played a decisive role on the side of the opponents of the Nepali state. This Indian involvement, however, was neither forced nor one-sided. It was sought and encouraged by Nepali leaders seeking change. On the Indian side also, both the state structures and the popular constituencies got engaged with the Nepali turbulence in different ways. However, in all the four cases, India's diplomatic breakthroughs in resolving the revolts were eventually turned into massive diplomatic breakdowns which prevented India building political capital in Nepal for its vital national interests.

After the success of the anti-Rana revolution, India failed to ensure a stable political order in Nepal and democratic institutionalization. As a result, the new King Mahendra managed to subvert India's goal of 'special relations', of consolidating mutual security arrangements and keeping foreign influences out of the kingdom. In 1960, India even supported the Nepali Congress's armed struggle against King Mahendra's coup. However, India failed to make the King reverse his autocratic actions, first due to the China's war on India and Nepal's successful playing of the China card, and then due to India's own internal troubles (emergency imposed by Mrs. Gandhi) in mid-1970s (1975–6). Nepali Congress's closer proximity to the Indian socialists made them suspect in the eyes of India's emergency regime, making Mrs. Gandhi force them to return to Nepal. India's security and economic interests suffered most during the decades of Nepal's monarchical supremacy in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. During 1988–90, India's pressures on Nepal in reaction to King Birendra's purchase of Chinese arms and efforts to erode 1950 Treaty arrangements, as also the lapse of the trade treaty facilitated the *Jan Andolan-I*. India's open and active popular support for the *Jan Andolan-I* eventually led King Birendra to abandon the Panchayat system and reintroduce multi-party democracy under constitutional monarchy.

However, India's casual approach to subsequent developments in Nepal, and the weaknesses of Nepali democratic forces could not stop monarchy from reasserting its power. Within just one decade, the King could re-establish himself in 2002 as the principal center of power and authority in Nepal. During 2005–6, Nepal's *Jan Andolan-II*, in the midst of much internal divide among policy-makers, India succeeded in helping the mainstreaming of the Maoists. The internal divide in India was triggered by the fear that the Nepal Maoists were supporting Indian left extremist insurgency led by the Maoists/Naxalites (Muni 2012). However, panicked by the Maoists' electoral success in Nepal in 2008 and their attempts to dominate the state, India pitted itself against them and its diplomacy degenerated to the extent that most of the good will earned was lost. A fall-out of discord between India and the dominant political forces in Nepal was the derailment of its constitution-making process. The First Constituent Assembly had to be dissolved without giving a constitution for New Nepal (Jha 2014).

The breakdowns in India's policy and diplomacy adversely affected its immediate and short-term interest in Nepal. More than six decades of such breakdowns have left India's interests eroded and its capacity to pursue them crippled. Though India has been able to keep the 1950 Indo-Nepal Treaty intact, its substance has been mutilated in many significant aspects affecting India. India's initially perceived mutual security arrangements stand almost completely withdrawn. India often encounters stiff resistance in securing required cooperation from Nepal in ensuring the security of its air traffic, and preventing the flow of terrorists, fake currency, and criminals across the border (Shrestha 2010; Das 2013). India has decided to invest in border management by offering 'construction of four Integrated check posts … 1450 kms of Terai roads and cross-border rail links at five locations' (MEA 2013). Its trade and businesses have been adversely affected and many of the Indian origin business magnets of Nepal have started shifting to greener pastures in India. India's connectivity projects along the border mentioned above will

also greatly facilitate the flow of trade and investment. It is unfortunate that even a promising agreement concluded between India and Nepal on promoting investment in 2011 has become controversial in Nepal's domestic politics as already noted. Nepalis continue to migrate to India for employment and economic opportunities and many of skilled and semi-skilled Indian workers seeking opportunities in Nepal face periodic difficulties and opposition. The Indo-Nepal border remains a breeding ground for criminals from both sides. On the whole, India may still possess considerable political clout in Nepal, but it has not been able to secure what its interests demand.

Fundamental Flaws, Diverse Stakeholders, and External Detractors

There are many reasons behind the breakdowns in India's Nepal policy and diplomacy. To begin with, there was a congenital flaw in India's policy being driven by a strong sense of inherent insecurity, bordering on paranoia. This insecurity arose from two developments; one was the victory of the communists in China and its military assertion in Tibet and the other was the unfolding of the Cold War which, to India's discomfiture, crept into the South Asian region. Nehru, who was otherwise respectful and sensitive to India's Asian neighbors, occasionally sounded offensive towards Nepal when India's security interests were ignored. This is borne out in many of his notes and instructions on Nepal (Bhasin 2004: xxi–xxxviii). He was fixated on coordinating Nepal's foreign policy with India which was in conflict with his broader approach of Asian independence and resurgence. Even while accepting the inevitability of China establishing diplomatic relations with Nepal, Nehru did not trust Nepal to deal with China directly. On Nepal–China relations, he suggested:

> Should the question of a new treaty be raised by China, Nepal cannot refuse to consider it. They should say that they would gladly discuss this matter but their foreign policy is coordinated with that of India and therefore, in any discussion India will have to be represented also. Nepal should not agree to discussions taking place in Peking. They should take place either in Kathmandu or Delhi and it should be made perfectly clear that India will be represented there also. (Bhasin 2004: xxxvii)

On the nature of foreign policy coordination also, Nehru was clear that it was Nepal's foreign policy coordination with India and not that of India with Nepal. When the Nepalese side asked for reciprocity in coordination, Nehru got upset and reacted:

> It is clearly understood that the foreign policy of Nepal and India is to be coordinated … the Government of Nepal are not concerned with all the innumerable

> contacts that we have with other countries while whatever contacts they may have with a foreign country is a matter of concern to us. (Bhasin 2004: xxxviii)

Nehru's obsessive preoccupation with Nepal's security and foreign policy coordination even drove him to micro-management of Nepali affairs. On excessive expenditure on Nepali delegation for the London coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, he admonished Prime Minister M. P. Koirala:

> It is absolutely important that the Nepal Government should pull itself out of the old habits and ways of the Rana Government ... All this business of night clubs and heavy drinking and foolish expenditure reacts powerfully on the public. (Bhasin 2004: xxxii)

Though said in good faith, such statements were not in accordance with diplomatic norms towards a sovereign independent neighboring country.

Nehru's approach encouraged India's diplomats to be casual about Nepal's sensitivities. From India's first ambassador to Nepal, Sir C. P. N. Singh to the present, the instances of diplomatic insensitivity and micro-management of Nepali affairs are innumerable.[7]

While India's policy played a decisive role in resolving Nepal's transformational conflicts, it lacked a clear and categorical stance which could sustain and consolidate the transformation over a long time. In bringing about the end of the Rana regime in 1951, India opted for a 'mixed' solution that restored the monarchy, kept the Ranas in power, and denied the democratic forces full control of their destiny. It has been noted above that India could not reverse King Mahendra's coup of December 1960 as a result of border conflict and military humiliation with China. This humiliation led India not only to drop its policy of supporting the armed rebellion of Nepali Congress against the King, but also to adopt an unduly submissive approach towards the King (Narayan 1970). While helping Nepali *Jan Andolan-I* in establishing multi-party democracy, the constitution that underscored these changes was allowed to remain basically tilted in favor of monarchy. Again in 2006, India was initially prepared to see the resolution of *Jan Andolan-II*, with the institution of monarchy remaining intact and the King still retaining his basic powers.[8] However, it had to accept the elimination of monarchy eventually.

What we see emerging from these policy actions was India's gross neglect of its own stated political principles and institutional preferences. Soon after the success of the anti-Rana revolution, India had agreed that there should be a Constituent Assembly to draft a democratic constitution. Nothing like this happened, leaving room for King Mahendra to stage his coup. This was again evident, as noted earlier, during the termination of the Panchayat system. In the republican Nepal India cannot completely absolve itself from the failure of the first Constituent Assembly in delivering a constitution for inclusive (federal) and secular democracy (Sharma 2013: Jha 2014).

There are innumerable instances of Indian policy-makers and diplomats investing considerable efforts and resources on seeking and promoting a friendly, even a pliable,

regime in Kathmandu rather than building viable and strong institutions. Such institutions can ensure stability and orderly political transformations; a necessary condition compatible with India's vital and long-term national interests. There is a marked consistency in India's preference for weak and pliable individuals in Nepal as against leaders that have grassroots support. During the 1950s, while India was happy with the Nepali Congress that symbolized the democratic aspirations of Nepali people, it preferred M. P. Koirala to lead the government over his step-brother B. P. Koirala who was more charismatic and popular. In 1960, when B. P. Koirala could not be avoided as a Prime Minister, Indian diplomacy tried to balance him with more moderate leaders in the Nepali Congress like Subarna Shumsher Rana and Surya Prasad Upadhyaya. In republican Nepal, India has preferred long-time established parties like the NC and UML over the more radical Maoists. India's preference for specific individual leaders among these parties is common knowledge in Nepal.

India's policy in Nepal may articulate a long-term perspective and interests but it often ends up taking a short-term view. In real terms, India's foreign policy establishment is hard pressed to devote much quality time in formulating or executing this policy. The level of information and critical assessment that goes into the making of policy is quite poor. There were Foreign Service officers managing the Nepal desk in India who were confused between one or another Nepali leaders and were not well versed in the background and behavioral patterns of such leaders. Many of the top-level policy-makers have direct and personal links with diverse Nepali political leaders and get carried away by highly subjective and interest-oriented inputs fed by these leaders during their frequent visits to the Indian capital. Even the higher level political engagements between the Indian and the Nepali leaders across political parties in both these countries look like family interactions and interest-oriented personal networking, producing emotional and idiosyncratic responses rather than rational policy choices.

Indian policy towards Nepal also reflects the pressures and persuasions of its many, diverse, and at times conflicting stakeholders. These stakeholders become particularly active in crisis situations and transformational phases. While the demands and perspectives of various ministries like commerce, home, etc. are coordinated through the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), there are establishments like the army (which has a special relationship with the Nepal army), Ministry of Defense, and intelligence agencies that have a reach beyond the MEA with direct access to the Prime Minister's office. The Indian states bordering Nepal like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Sikkim, and West Bengal also at times have a say on Nepal policy. Bihar's selfish interests made a considerable impact on the Kosi and Gandak agreements during the 1950s vitiating the entire gamut of water resources sharing issues between India and Nepal. In addition to this, there are other diverse constituencies in India that impinge on Nepal policy like the business community having trade and investment interests in Nepal, the Hindu religious and cultural establishments (Shankaracharyas, Vishwa Hindu Parishad, Rastriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS)), and members of the old Princely States (like Gwaliar, Kashmir, Rajasthan, Pratapgarh, etc.) who have matrimonial and other family ties in Nepal's royal and elite families and are also powerful members of India's mainstream political parties. Many

of the prominent political leaders of bordering states also have close networks with Nepali political and socio-economic establishments and lobby for specific policy initiatives. These stakeholders dent rational policy choices and slow down their formulation and execution. Nehru was in regular correspondence with his socialist colleague Jai Prakash Narayan from Bihar on Nepal affairs. If the Indian socialists had not opposed Mrs. Gandhi's emergency rule, perhaps the Nepali Congress leader B. P. Koirala would not have been forced in 1976 to return to Nepal and subsequently compromise with the King. When Rajiv Gandhi withdrew special trading arrangements between India and Nepal during 1989 after the expiry of the bilateral trade treaty, those who made strong representation to him were India's then army chief, Shankaracharyas, business lobbies, and Congress leaders belonging to the former princely order. During 2005–6, there was a massive mobilization by King Gyanendra of his sympathizers and supporters in India to ensure India's backing for his direct rule and political approach (Sharma 2013).

It was inevitable for the Indian policy establishment to reckon with the presence of powerful extra-regional interests in Nepal, more so as its helplessness in securing close coordination with Nepal's foreign policy became evident. The implications of India's adversarial relations with China and Pakistan could never be overlooked. The United States also always figured in India's Nepal calculations, as an adversary during the initial years of the Cold War. During the early 1950s, Nehru disapproved of the US approach in Nepal. He faced US-supported opposition during his visit to Nepal in 1954 and strongly reacted to the US policy of supporting Pakistan and Nepal against India. He said:

> The United States imagine that by this policy, they have completely outflanked India's so called neutralism and will thus bring India to her knees. Whatever the future may hold, this is not going to happen. The first result of all this will be an extreme dislike of the United States in India. As it is, our relations are cool. (Gopal 1979: 185)

However, as tensions between India and China started to grow towards the latter half of the 1950s, India worked to find areas of cooperation with the United States in Nepal.

With the firming up of the Indo-US strategic partnership, greater coordination between India and the United States on Nepal and other regional affairs has emerged as was evident during the *Jan Andolan-II* (2005–6). This Indo-US understanding and coordination is, however, not without areas of divergence both in relation to Nepal's domestic power structure and in dealing with China's growing presence and influence.

The last but not the least aspect of India's policy that contributed to its diplomatic breakdowns in Nepal was poor use of India's soft power, particularly economic support for strategic objectives. India has not been able to undertake any major infrastructural projects since the 1960s, with the exception of the East–West Highway (*Mahendra Rajmarg*), which in any case was forced on India by Nepal's use of the so-called China card. In part, this is explained by Nepal's failure to move on hydro-power development and infrastructure projects. India's proposals for linking Nepal with India's vast rail network as well as through north–south link roads in Nepal Terai are also getting bureaucratically delayed. Ten years of Maoist insurgency (1996–2006) and persisting

uncertainty on constitution building in Nepal has also adversely affected cooperation between the two countries. In the area of soft power, India has an impressive program of educational scholarships and fellowships for human resource development in Nepal, numbering more than 3,000 by 2013, which unfortunately cater more to Kathmandu's powerful political constituencies than contributing to broader good will at the mass level. Similarly, the programs under the B. P. Koirala Foundation could be more creatively evolved to counter Nepal's anti-Indian constituencies and improve India's overall image in Nepali perceptions. India also needs to reach out to Nepal's Buddhist and tribal (*Janjati*) segments.

Prospects

India's economic rise and political stability for the past decade and a half have opened new opportunities for India and refurbished its regional image. In the process, India has gained considerable self-confidence and has redefined its regional and global roles. India's Nepal policy has not remained totally unaffected as was evident in India accepting a republican Nepal and working with a Maoist regime in Kathmandu, though only for a short while. Nepal has also been encouraged to take advantage of India's economic growth and integrate its economy with that of India. There are, however, two formidable challenges facing India's Nepal policy. One is the internal politics in both India and Nepal. It may be hoped that the Second Constituent Assembly will be able to deliver a viable constitution for inclusive democracy in Nepal. In India, the 2014 elections have produced a strong Bhartiya Janata Party led government which needs to continue to engage with Nepal's representative forces without being guided by its ideological and religious preferences if any. The developmental orientation of the new Indian political dispensation may provide greater pragmatism and rationale in dealing with Nepal.

Secondly, there is the emerging dimension of resurgent China and its ever-expanding South Asian strategic profile. Like many other South Asian countries, Nepal too would like to cash on the Chinese opportunity. India has to make sure that this cashing in is not at the cost of its vital stakes. For this, India has to raise its own political and economic profile in Nepal as an enduring and reliable partner of the people. India need not match a Chinese dollar for Indian rupees in Nepal. With the new Indian government's expected greater economic engagement with China, possibilities of evolving a framework for developmental coexistence of India and China in Nepal should be explored. This would avoid making Nepal a battleground for their strategic competition. In view of Chinese vulnerabilities in Tibet, India must assure China that it will not join hands with the United States or any other third power trying to exploit the Tibet situation to the disadvantage of China. India may also press and persuade China to resolve the Tibetan issue through consultations with the Dalai Lama. Helping China build its confidence in Tibet will also have a direct and immediate positive impact on the resolution of the Sino-Indian border dispute. As its spinoff, China will hopefully respect India's

sensitivities in Nepal and a possible phase of trilateral economic engagement between China, India, and Nepal may be initiated. This in turn may also open up opportunities for India to invest in Tibet.

Notes

1. Recall Mao's famous statement comparing Tibet with a palm of China whose five fingers were Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim, Ladakh, and Arunachal Pradesh (then called NEFA).
2. The text and a detailed discussion of the various provisions of this Treaty, is available in Muni (1992).
3. On December 15, 1960, King Mahendra dismissed the duly elected government of Nepali Congress led by B. P. Koirala. He put Koirala and many of his colleagues under detention, dismissed the parliamentary system, and established his direct rule under what was called the Panchayat system. Nehru strongly reacted and tried to persuade the King to restore parliamentary order.
4. Abdul Karim Tunda, a Pakistani terrorist arrested in August 2013 on the India–Nepal border reportedly disclosed that fake Indian currency notes are printed in Islamabad and Peshawar in Pakistan and are pushed into India via Bangladesh and Nepal. *The Economic Times* (New Delhi), August 20, 2013.
5. A similar note of January 2013, of the Nepalese foreign ministry on India–Nepal relations said on 'security cooperation': 'To deal jointly with each other's security concerns, the two countries have established the following mechanisms: Meeting of the Home Secretaries, Nepal–India Bilateral Consultative Group on Security Issues (NIBCGSI), Joint Working Group on Border Management (JWG) and Border District Coordination Committees (BDCC).' <http://www.mofa.gov.np/en/nepal-india-relations-100.html>, accessed November 6, 2013.
6. 'BIPPA between Nepal, India against national interests', *The Rising Nepal* (Kathmandu), October 23, 2011.
7. For C. P. N Singh's high-handedness towards Nepali leaders, see Koirala (2001). For India's alleged interference in Nepal's domestic affairs during the post-2006 period, see Varadarajan Siddharth (2009, 2010).
8. This was evident in the Indian good-offices of its special mission led by the former Kashmir ruler and a relation of Nepal King Gyanendra, Dr. Karan Singh in April 2006. This Indian approach had to be revised as a result of immense popular disapproval and resistance from political parties (Muni 2012).

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CHAPTER 30

INDIA–SRI LANKA EQUATION

Geography as Opportunity

V. SURYANARAYAN

> Ceylon cannot forget that India and Ceylon are close and that India, by her size, is like a giant. It is easy enough to create psychological barriers and ill will, but not so easy to remove or control them. I cannot conceive of any hostile action on the part of India towards a country like Ceylon if it does not threaten her freedom.
>
> Jawaharlal Nehru (Gopal 1977: 16)

LOCATED in the southern tip of India and at the crossroads of international trade, the Republic of Sri Lanka is likely to play an important role in international affairs. Given prevalent suspicions about India's intentions and objectives the Sinhalese leaders are assiduously cultivating China and Pakistan to checkmate India's influence. Sri Lanka has the right to diversify its strategic and economic linkages, but when it adversely affects India's strategic environment, it should be a matter of great concern to the policy-makers in New Delhi (Suryanarayan 1985: 1–6).

LOVE–HATE RELATIONS

All aspects of Sri Lankan life—demography, religion, language, and culture—bear the indelible imprint of Indian influence. In 1927 Gandhi visited Ceylon and in the course of one of his speeches remarked that 'I do not feel that I am in Ceylon, but I feel that I am in a bit of India' (Gandhi 1965: 320). At the same time, the asymmetrical nature of relations made Sinhalese leaders apprehensive of India's intentions and capabilities. It is the tragedy of South Asian history that instead of striving for close cooperation with its northern neighbor, the Sinhalese leaders frequently sought external assistance to counter the

Indian threat. According to Sir John Kotelawala, the former Prime Minister, 'the day Ceylon dispenses with Englishmen completely, the island would go under India'. He regarded membership of the Commonwealth 'as the first insurance against any possibility of aggression from nearer home' (Kodikara 1965: 39).

More than anybody else Jawaharlal Nehru was conscious of the twin facets of India–Sri Lanka relations; he frequently highlighted the necessity to promote understanding on the basis of trust and cooperation. In a visit to Ceylon in 1939 to understand the problems of people of Indian origin, Nehru came face-to-face with the 'adamant and unresponsive' attitude of the Sinhalese leaders. Despite his frustration, Nehru took a long-term view of India–Sri Lanka relations:

> When the British Empire fades away, where will Ceylon go? She must associate herself, economically at least, with larger groups and India is obviously indicated. Because of this, it is unfortunate that many of the leaders of Ceylon should help in creating barriers between India and Ceylon. They do not seem to realize that while India can live without Ceylon, in the future to come, Ceylon may not be able to live without India. (Gopal 1977: 61)

Certain significant events illustrate such love–hate relations. In April 1971, when Ceylon was faced with the revolt led by the Janatha Vimukti Peramuna (JVP), the government asked for external assistance to defend the country. The first country to respond spontaneously was India. The Indian air force flew from Bangalore to defend Katunayake airport and Indian naval ships provided security to Colombo harbor. How did Colombo respond to Indian gestures of good will? Six months later, during the East Pakistan crisis, the Government of Sri Lanka provided refueling facilities for Pakistani air force planes on their way to East Pakistan to carry out savage reprisals against Bangladeshi nationalists. In more recent times, the induction of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF), on the invitation of President Jayewardene under the provisions of the India–Sri Lanka Accord, enabled Sri Lankan army to devote itself completely to countering the JVP threat. What is instructive for India is the fact that the military marginalization of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), accomplished at heavy cost of men and materials, did not earn for India the corresponding gratitude of the Sinhalese. On the contrary, it gave a fillip to Sinhala-Buddhist chauvinism and provided justification for the argument that Sri Lanka would soon become the client state of its northern neighbor (Suryanarayan 1998). What is more, it brought the two hitherto antagonistic forces, Prabhakaran and Premadasa together; it is well known that the President provided the Tigers with a substantial amount of finance and weapons. The honeymoon did not last long: in the end Premadasa had to pay the wages of sin, and he became a victim to the cult of the bomb perfected by the LTTE. The wheel turned full circle again. When the military crisis deepened after the fall of Elephant Pass to the Tigers in April 2000 and the Tigers were about to re-enter their former stronghold, not only the Sri Lankan government, but also extremist hard line sections among the Sinhalese, pleaded for Indian military assistance. Having learnt bitter lessons from the past, Indian response was naturally lukewarm.

Stateless People in Ceylon

The major problem which confronted the two governments soon after independence was the legal status of people of Indian origin in the island. The Indian Tamils, as they were called, were the descendants of those Indian laborers who were taken to the island under the protective umbrella of the British to provide labor for the opening of tea plantations, development of Colombo port, and construction of the network of roads which linked the country.

The Indian laborers were initially 'birds of passage', but gradually they began to put down roots and became permanent settlers in the island. The Soulbury Committee Report, published on the eve of independence, estimated that the degree of permanent settlement was nearly 80 per cent (Devaraj 1984: 146–65). As long as the British ruled, Indian Tamils had the same legal status as Sinhalese and Sri Lankan Tamils, for all were British subjects. As Jawaharlal Nehru wrote in 1948, 'one of the conditions for emigration to other countries to which the Government of India have always attached utmost importance has been that an emigrant laborer shall be given facilities to settle in the country—on equal terms with the members of the indigenous population' (Gupta 1963: 8). Colombo did not subscribe to this point of view. According to W. T. Jayasinghe, former Defense and Foreign Secretary, Indian settlers were Indian nationals. In his book, *The Indo-Ceylon Talks: The Politics of Immigrant Labor*, Jayasinghe wrote: 'The fact of their Indian nationality was never in question' (Jayasinghe 2002: 3). Colombo wanted to absorb only a small fraction of the Indian population as Sri Lankan citizens. From this perspective, Sri Lankan officials argued that it is necessary to prescribe rigid tests for proving permanent abiding interest of Indian community. Herein lies the seed of the 'absorbable minimum' put forward by successive Sri Lankan governments. The Indian civil servant Girija Shankar Bajpai summed up the apparent discrimination: 'The Indian who has worked in Ceylon is to be thrown back to India as a squeezed lemon' (Suryanarayan 2007a).

The Ceylon Citizenship Act of 1948 and the Indian and Pakistani Residents Act, 1949 not only disenfranchised the Indian Tamils, they also rendered them stateless. The provisions of the Citizenship Act were so cumbersome that Indian applicants were not able to produce documentary evidence to the satisfaction of Ceylon officials. The Indian Tamils were thus ostracized from the political mainstream. It was Colombo's implicit assumption that those who failed to qualify for Ceylon citizenship were unquestionably Indian nationals and that New Delhi should regard them as such. On the contrary, as far as New Delhi was concerned, its policy was to discourage Indians Overseas from applying for Indian citizenship. In the protracted negotiations that took place between New Delhi and Colombo Nehru emphatically maintained that except for those who voluntarily opted for Indian citizenship, Indian immigrants in the island were the responsibility of Sri Lanka. The era of statelessness continued and the problem appeared to be interminable.

Following Nehru's demise in 1964, the time tested and principled policy was derailed and sidetracked by Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri. New Delhi wanted to come out of diplomatic isolation in South Asia after the Sino-Indian conflict and was prepared to make unilateral gestures to befriend its immediate neighbors. Advised by C. S. Jha, Commonwealth Secretary, New Delhi decided to adopt a policy of 'give and take' on the issue of stateless Indians which in actual practice meant more conceding than demanding (Jha 1983: 276–7). The clever politician that Sirimavo Bandaranaike was, she made the best out of New Delhi's new stance. Ably assisted by Shirley Amarasinghe, an astute Sri Lankan diplomat, Colombo clinched the issue in October 1964. Under the Sirimavo–Shastri Pact 1964 India agreed to confer citizenship on 5,250,000 people of Indian origin plus their natural increase, while Ceylon agreed to confer citizenship on 300,000 plus their natural increase on the basis of 7:4. By a subsequent agreement in 1974, India agreed to confer citizenship on 75,000 persons, while Colombo also agreed to confer citizenship on an equal number. The entire process was expected to be completed by October 1981.

A few significant aspects of the two agreements must be underlined. It is the tragedy of India–Sri Lanka relations that these agreements, which had a bearing on thousands of lives, were concluded without taking into consideration the views of the people affected. It should also be pointed out that important political leaders in Tamil Nadu joined the chorus of opposition. C. Rajagopalachari, Kamaraj Nadar, C. N. Annadurai, V. K. Krishna Menon, and P. Ramamurthy expressed their resentment and reservation. Perhaps the greatest indictment was that the two agreements did not fulfill their objectives. Even after the expiry of the pacts, the problem of statelessness continued to haunt Indian Tamils.

Meanwhile, thanks to the initiative taken by Thomas Abraham, Indian High Commissioner in Sri Lanka between 1978 and 1982, New Delhi began to get sensitized about the inhuman aspects of the agreements. Thomas Abraham brought the 'conundrum of natural increase' to the notice of Indira Gandhi. By the 1970s India had to accept not only the natural increase, but also the natural increase of the natural increase. Indira Gandhi responded, 'This cannot go on forever' (Abraham 1986). Adding to the dismay of New Delhi, lumpen sections of the Sinhalese organized riots in plantation areas in 1981 with the objective of driving out as many Indian Tamils as possible to India. In one of his memorable statements, Thomas Abraham declared that if Colombo was unwilling to restore law and order in plantation areas, India would have to think of taking its own steps. The warning had the desired effect and sent shockwaves through government circles. President Jayewardene acted quickly and the situation was brought under control. On a parallel plane, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. G. Ramachandran led an all-party delegation to New Delhi and requested central government not to extend the Sirimavo–Shastri Pact. As a result, New Delhi took the bold decision that the agreements would not be extended beyond October 31, 1981. How did Colombo respond to the situation? In his book, W. T. Jayasinghe has turned a blind eye to the momentous developments of 1981. In fact, only one paragraph is devoted to the shocking incidents that took place. There is no mention of organized violence, no mention of Thomas

Abraham's warning, and no analysis of New Delhi's changed stance. Jayasinghe mentions that it was a bolt from the blue when in March 1982 the Indian High Commissioner transmitted a third person note from the Indian government to the Ministry of Defense that the two agreements of 1964 and 1974 were no longer binding. Jayasinghe added that India thus delivered its coup de grâce to the two agreements (Jayasinghe 2002: 450).

The Indian Tamils were united in their demand that Sri Lankan citizenship should be conferred on stateless people. They united under the leadership of S. Thondaman, the leader of the Ceylon Workers Congress and a Cabinet Minister since 1978. Thondaman argued that if the problem of statelessness continued, India had every right to interfere in the domestic affairs of Sri Lanka. It was combined with both parliamentary and extra-parliamentary struggles which finally paved the way for enactment of the Citizenship to Stateless Persons (Special Provisions) Act 39 of 1988, which removed the stigma of statelessness from Indian Tamils. The next victory was the conferment of citizenship on Indian passport holders yet to be repatriated to India and their descendants. The enabling legislation was enacted by the United National Party (UNP) government led by Ranil Wikramasinghe.

Delimitation of Maritime Boundary

The Palk Bay region, in which the island of Kachchatheevu is located, has in recent years become a bone of contention among Tamil Nadu fishermen, the Sri Lankan navy, and Sri Lankan Tamil fishermen. The rich fishing grounds on the Sri Lankan side have become an area of conflict. The Indian fishermen are being intimidated and harassed; their catch dumped into the sea; and during years of ethnic conflict, suspecting them to be Tamil Tigers the Sri Lankan navy used to shoot and kill them. The root cause of tension is conflict of interests. On one side are the governments in Colombo and New Delhi which concluded the maritime boundary agreements of 1974 and 1976; on the other side are Indian fishermen who will not give up their fishing rights which they have enjoyed for several centuries. Adding to the complexity are Sri Lankan Tamil fishermen, who find their livelihood threatened by indiscriminate use of bottom trawlers by Indian fishermen.

Successive governments in Tamil Nadu have not reconciled to the ceding of Kachchatheevu, a small barren island in the Palk Bay, to Sri Lanka. The island was part of the Zamindari of the Raja of Ramnad and when Zamindari was abolished after independence it became a part of Madras Presidency. In order to avoid strains in bilateral relations, New Delhi chose to ignore territorial claims and viewed the island as a disputed territory; what is more, in the process of delimitation, the principle of median line was not strictly adhered to so that the island could fall on the Sri Lankan side. More saddening, while Article 5 of the 1974 agreement protected the traditional fishing rights of Indian fishermen to fish in and around Kachchatheevu, these rights were also given away by the 1976 Agreement. Suggestions made by the governments in Tamil Nadu that

the island should be got back on the basis of 'lease in perpetuity' and licensed Indian fishermen should be allowed to fish in Sri Lankan waters up to five nautical miles, with reciprocal rights to Sri Lankan fishermen to fish in the Indian Exclusive Economic Zone, have not made much headway because New Delhi does not want to reopen the boundary dispute (Suryanarayan 1994, 2005).

The fact must be highlighted that fishermen throughout the world are no respecters of maritime boundaries: wherever there are fish, the fishermen go to them. The years of ethnic conflict turned out to be a God-given opportunity for Indian fishermen. Since fishing was banned by the Sri Lankan government for security reasons, Indian fishermen used to go deep into Sri Lankan waters to catch prawns. With the end of ethnic conflict, Sri Lankan fishermen want to resume their vocation, but they find the presence of Indian trawlers to be a major threat to their livelihood. The government of Tamil Nadu does not want to recognize this reality and this attitude has contributed to worsening situation. A solution to the vexed issue can be found only if the livelihood of fishermen becomes the major focus and a solution is found by dialogue among fishermen, backed by two governments. This idea is discussed in the concluding part of the chapter.

India and Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka

India's policy towards ethnic conflict has taken a zig-zag course, confounding both supporters and critics. One significant factor for the sorry state of affairs had been lack of coordination among various agencies involved in implementation. During the Nehru era, the distinction between Sri Lankan Tamils and Indian Tamils was clearly maintained. Since Colombo's policy towards Sri Lankan Tamils fell within the domain of domestic politics, there was realization of its obvious limitations. But as the gulf between Colombo and Tamils began to widen in the 1970s a shift of opinion took place on both sides of the Palk Strait. The widespread sympathy for the Tamils in Tamil Nadu and the sanctuary and support that Tamil militants received in the state were interpreted in Colombo as an Indian attempt to destabilize the state. In that situation New Delhi began to give up its policy of aloofness; the Indian diplomats in Colombo advised the UNP and the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) to work together for the common good.

The communal holocaust of July 1983 and subsequent partisan steps taken by President Jayewardene, including deliberate exclusion of India from among countries which Colombo approached for help, created righteous indignation within India. The ethnic conflict became enmeshed with strategic objectives. India's Sri Lanka policy was governed by two considerations: (1) geostrategic concerns and the desire to insulate Sri Lanka from external forces which might have a destabilizing effect on the South Asian strategic environment; (2) geographical proximity and ethnic affinities should not lead to resurgence of secessionist demands in Tamil Nadu. Thus while proclaiming India's commitment to the unity of Sri Lanka, New Delhi also helped Tamils to wrest concessions from unwilling Sinhalese dominated government. The cumulative effect was the

pursuance of a two-pronged strategy—mediatory and militant supportive—which turned out to be contradictory and which created suspicions both among Tamils and the Sri Lankan government.

When Colombo started *Operation Vadamarachi* to annihilate the Tigers, New Delhi made it clear that it would not permit a military solution. The dropping of food in Jaffna by the Indian air force in violation of Sri Lankan air space and the inability of Colombo to mobilize international support against India, combined with reports of serious rifts within Sri Lankan armed forces, compelled President Jayewardene to sign the India–Sri Lanka Accord of July 1987. It would have been better if the agreement had been signed between Colombo and Tamil parties, with India guaranteeing its implementation. Consultation with Tamils was done in haste, with absolutely no guarantee of their compliance. In the end, the mediator became the key actor and finally the villain. Concluded without Tamil participation and a Sinhala consensus, the Accord itself became a source of discord in Sri Lanka. New Delhi got caught in the cross-fire and roused the anger and indignation of both communities (Suryanarayan 2007b).

The tragic experience of the IPKF is a clear illustration of the limits to what a foreign power can contribute to influence developments in a neighboring country. New Delhi was never in control of situation and events moved fast, very often in an unexpected direction. New Delhi never anticipated that, pushed to the wall, the Tigers and President Premadasa would join together against Indian armed forces. The change of government in India brought about a qualitative change in India's Sri Lanka policy. The IPKF had to withdraw from Sri Lanka without attaining the objectives it had set itself. To cap it all the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi by the guerrilla squad of the LTTE brought about a catharsis; India is yet to recover from that experience. The immediate response was to ban the LTTE as a terrorist organization and adopt hands-off policy towards Sri Lanka (Suryanarayan 2010).

As the Fourth Eelam War commenced and the war against the LTTE degenerated into a war against Tamil civilians, New Delhi began to extend support to Sri Lankan armed forces without directly getting involved in the war. An important aspect of cooperation was sharing of intelligence which enabled Sri Lankan armed forces to destroy the floating warehouses of the Tigers, namely the ships which were bringing arms and ammunition to fuel the Tiger war machine. Without supply of arms, the LTTE became fish out of the water. Secondly, coordination between the Sri Lankan navy and the Indian coast guard prevented flow of refugees from war-affected areas to Tamil Nadu. India's support was crucial in Sri Lanka's victory in the war against terrorism.

13th Amendment to the Constitution and Devolution of Powers to Provinces

Despite failures of Indian policy, it must be highlighted that the enactment of the 13th Amendment to the constitution, following the India–Sri Lanka Accord, was a significant step towards introduction of devolution throughout the island. It was an attempt to

have a new constitutional arrangement for power sharing between majority and minority groups and between the center and the provinces. Unfortunately, in the perception of many Sinhalese the Accord was an imposition from India. While one section of the government led by President Jayewardene and Gamini Dissanayake supported the Accord, another powerful section led by Prime Minister Premadasa and Lalith Athulathmudali attempted to sabotage it.

Given the well-known allergy of Sinhalese leaders to the term 'federal' the Provincial Council system was an attempt to institute a constitutional structure which would provide the substance of federalism without using the term federal. However, given Sinhalese ideology which subscribed to centralization of power and identification of the state with the majority community it was inevitable that the Provincial Council system became entangled in serious difficulties. The Northeastern Provincial Council had only a short life of seventeen months (November 1988 to March 1990). The Provincial Council lacked financial resources; what is more, by disingenuous mechanisms like characterizing a subject as coming within the purview of national policy, central authority was reintroduced in agrarian services and transport corporations. The President established Divisional Secretariats under the control of central government, which further undermined the provinces.

During the Fourth Eelam War, in order to mobilize Indian support, President Mahinda Rajapaksa repeatedly stated that the government would sincerely implement the 13th Amendment once the war was won. However, these assurances were forgotten and systematic attempts are being made to dilute devolution proposals. The merger of the north and the east has been undone by a judicial pronouncement. The President has also made it clear that the government has no intention of devolving powers relating to police and land. Equally saddening, instead of negotiating directly with the Tamil National Alliance (TNA), which was voted to power to the Northern Provincial Council with a massive majority, the present stance of the government is that all constitutional proposals will be discussed in a Parliamentary Select Committee where the TNA will be outnumbered and outvoted. The massive presence of Sri Lankan armed forces in the Northern Province, occupation of civilian land by High Security Zones, and interference by the military in the day-to-day life of the people continue to be matters of serious concern as far as Tamils are concerned. What is more, the reluctance of the Sri Lankan government to cooperate with UN organizations in conducting credible inquiries to punish those who were responsible for gross human rights violations has led to a running war of words among Colombo and UN Human Rights spokespersons and human rights organizations. Though five years have elapsed since the end of the war, ethnic reconciliation remains a distant dream.

Sri Lankan Refugees: Reluctance to Return to Sri Lanka

It will be in India's interest if the return to normalcy in Sri Lanka is accompanied by return of refugees to their homeland. There are nearly 66,000 refugees in 110 camps

spread throughout the state; there are also 34,000 non-camp refugees. In order to facilitate the return of refugees, various agencies involved in repatriation have taken welcome initiatives: the government of Tamil Nadu gives exit permits at short notice; the Sri Lankan Deputy High Commission in Chennai issues birth certificates to children born in refugee camps and also temporary passports to travel to Sri Lanka; the UNHCR in Chennai gives free air tickets from Chennai/Tiruchi-Colombo sector and also provides modest rehabilitation assistance to start their lives anew. Despite these gestures, the return of refugees had been taking place at a snail's pace: from 2002, when UNHCR assistance commenced to the end November 2013, only 12,005 Sri Lankans belonging to 3,632 families have been repatriated to Sri Lanka (statistics provided by UNHCR in Chennai, 2014).

Why are refugees reluctant to return? The refugees with whom the author had the opportunity to exchange views are unanimous that they are uncertain as to what the future holds for them. There are no job opportunities in Sri Lanka and many who have returned languish in their new homes. What is more distressing is the fact that whatever new jobs are created as a result of development work invariably go to Sinhalese settlers. Fortunately, there is no pressure on refugees from the Tamil Nadu government to return to Sri Lanka. The conditions in the camps have been steadily improving and, what is more, there is absolutely no fear of insecurity. However, a matter of serious concern should be mentioned. Some refugees are falling prey to touts, pay huge sums of money to them, and are trying to migrate to Australia through illegal means. The media reports indicate that many refugees have lost their lives on their long journey to Australia and even the few who have reached Australian shores are kept outside the country pending decision on their applications for asylum.

India Cannot Afford to Pursue a Policy of Opportunism

Being a democratic country, susceptible to pressures from various sources, New Delhi has to be sensitive to public opinion and also to regional parties. The revision of its stance on human rights violations in Sri Lanka as evident in Geneva meetings of the UN Human Rights Council and the downgrading of Indian representation in the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting from Prime Minister to the Minister for External Affairs are illustrations of how pressure groups can bring about changes in India's Sri Lanka policy. In other words, India cannot afford to follow a policy of cynicism and opportunism as China does. What is more, developments in Sri Lanka are not strictly matters of domestic jurisdiction; what afflicts Sri Lanka will have its fallout on Tamil Nadu. The success of Indian diplomacy will depend upon, not imposing a solution on Sri Lanka, but how soon New Delhi will be able to persuade Colombo to devolve substantial powers to Tamil areas so that a Tamil can be a Tamil while being a proud Sri

Lankan. The full potential of bilateral cooperation—economic, political, cultural, and educational—can be attained only when ethnic reconciliation takes place.

New Delhi's Policy towards Human Rights Violations

The gross human rights violations that took place during the last phase of the Fourth Eelam War were discussed in the United Nations in 2009. India, along with China, Russia, and Pakistan, not only defeated the move to investigate the violations, New Delhi also ensured that a resolution was passed congratulating the Sri Lankan government for defeating a ruthless terrorist organization. But as Colombo began to dilly-dally in instituting a credible internal inquiry mechanism to punish the guilty and also began to turn its back on assurances of implementing the 13th Amendment, India began to revise its stance. There were also domestic pressures from political parties in Tamil Nadu that India should take the initiative and get the guilty punished. As a result, in 2012 and 2013, India voted against Sri Lanka and supported a resolution which was intended to persuade Sri Lanka to institute an internal inquiry mechanism and also speed up the process of ethnic reconciliation. The 2014 resolution was qualitatively different because it called for an international investigation. It meant intrusion in the domestic affairs of Sri Lanka. What is more, it ignored the positive steps taken by the Sri Lankan government like the holding of elections to the Northern Provincial Council and successful rehabilitation of internally displaced people. According to an Indian spokesman India abstained from voting because it is India's firm conviction that an 'intrusive approach that undermines national sovereignty and integrity is counter-productive' (Suryanarayan 2014).

Prospects of Economic Cooperation

India–Sri Lanka cooperation encompasses many areas—cultural, educational, political, strategic, and economic—and all sections of Sri Lanka society have reaped benefits from this multi-pronged cooperation. As far as scholarships for higher study in educational institutions are concerned, maximum benefit has gone to the majority Sinhalese community. Similarly India provides training to more Sri Lankan naval personnel in Indian naval establishments than all other countries put together. And the Sri Lankan navy is overwhelmingly Sinhalese. Economic linkages are gathering momentum; it received a big boost after the conclusion of the India–Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement (FTA) in 2000. According to the Indian High Commissioner in Sri Lanka trade has multiplied as much as eight times, crossing the milestone of US$5 billion in 2011–12. (Indian High Commission Colombo 2013: 3–4).

Geography as Opportunity

If the full potential of bilateral cooperation is to be realized, it is necessary that the two countries should look at Palk Bay not as a contested territory, but as a common heritage. Historically the shallow waters of the Palk Bay have not acted as a barrier, but as a bridge, which facilitated the movement of people, ideas, and goods. The cultural efflorescence in Sri Lanka was the cumulative result of cross-cultural interaction. During recent years, in order to surmount the problems of fishermen, the author has been advocating that Palk Bay should be regarded as a legacy in common to both countries. India must project the vision that the seas which unite India and Sri Lanka are our common inheritance and the harnessing of marine resources jointly will only lead to a win-win situation. In order to accomplish this task, we must recognize that in addition to the governments of India and Sri Lanka, there are other important stakeholders: the government of Tamil Nadu and the government of the Northern Province in Sri Lanka and, above all, the fishermen of the two countries. A dialogue among fishermen is the need of the hour; it will lead to a solution from below and will have greater chances of success, rather than a solution imposed from above by New Delhi and Colombo. A Palk Bay Authority should be constituted, consisting of representatives of both countries, including fisheries experts, marine ecologists, and fishermen's representatives. The Palk Bay Authority can determine the ideal sustainable catch per year, the fishing equipment to be used, the number of days Indian and Sri Lankan fishermen can fish, and how the sea can be enriched. What is more, the Governments in Chennai and New Delhi should take the initiative to start joint ventures among Sri Lankan and Indian Tamil fishermen so that they can undertake deep sea fishing in multi-day boats. The focus of cooperative development and sharing of know-how should be enrichment of marine resources and bringing about qualitative improvement in the lives of fishermen and their families (Suryanarayan and Swaminathan 2009).

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CHAPTER 31

INDIA'S BIFURCATED LOOK TO 'CENTRAL EURASIA'

The Central Asian Republics and Afghanistan

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Introduction

India has long been touted as one of the emerging giants on the world stage, and a country whose international interactions are expected to become a defining feature of what is increasingly perceived to be a nascent 'Asian century'. Not surprisingly, therefore, India's foreign policy outlook has been subject to a growing public, policy, and scholarly scrutiny. In particular, its relations with Afghanistan and the post-Soviet states of Central Asia have greatly contributed to this increasing interest in the practices of India's 'enlightened self-interest' in its extended neighbourhood (Kavalski 2012: 46). It needs to be stated at the outset that both Afghanistan and the Central Asian Republics occupy a shared geopolitical space within Indian strategic purview. It is therefore not uncommon to encounter the assertion that the 'geographical contiguity, racial and religious affinity, and long-established transborder communications have provided a strong basis for cross-border fraternization between the people of Central Asia and Afghanistan' (Warikoo 2003: 143).

In fact some observers have even argued that both Afghanistan and the post-Soviet states of Central Asia are part of a broader pattern of regional interactions labelled as 'Central Eurasia', which includes 'the republics of Central Asia, Afghanistan, the Caucasus, the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region, the Tibet Autonomous Region, and Kashmir' (Sharma 2004: 275). While such understanding illustrates the patterns and practices of Indian strategic thinking, it also reflects the legacy of the Cold War period when *only* Afghanistan (and Mongolia) were perceived as part of Central Asia (Rahul 1981). This understanding should not be misunderstood as a suggestion

that India does not distinguish between the context and issues of Afghanistan and the Central Asian states. On the contrary, as the following sections will demonstrate, Indian pundits and policy-makers are quite versed in the nuances differentiating Afghanistan and the Central Asian countries. However, by putting them together under the label of Central Eurasia, the suggestion is that despite the obvious divergences, the issues that frame India's strategic interests in both Afghanistan and the Central Asian states are interconnected.

It needs to be stressed at the outset that India's strategic outreach to the region is constrained by and, at the same time, intends to overcome the limitations posed by geography—namely, the very real geopolitical barrier posed by Pakistan and the Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. In this respect, in its relations with Afghanistan and the Central Asian Republics, New Delhi has found itself perforce working with other international actors in order to secure a strategic foothold in the region. For the purposes of brevity, this study will use the term 'Central Eurasia' to designate the geopolitical space occupied by Afghanistan and the post-Soviet states of Central Asia. The chapter explores the historical contexts that frame the current exigencies of India's engagement with Central Eurasia. The discussion of the past becomes a prologue for the contemporary modalities of India's regional interactions. The investigation then undertakes a parallel assessment of New Delhi's engagement with both Afghanistan and the Central Asian Republics. Interestingly, the comparative analysis seems to indicate that what has scuppered India's outreach to Central Asia has become the key to its effective involvement in Afghanistan—namely, that India has engaged both in the context of its strategic rivalry with Pakistan.

History as Cultural Capital

It is to be expected that any bilateral relationship will draw on the past experience of its interlocutors. Yet, it appears that New Delhi treats the history of its associations with Central Eurasia with marked distinction. The tendency invariably is to position history as a powerful cultural capital that legitimizes India's involvement in the region (Kavalski 2010: 97). In this respect, India projects itself as a 'civilizational state which should deploy its culture (part of its inherent greatness) as a resource and a valuable diplomatic asset, so that others can become cognizant of the moral quality of the Indian foreign and strategic policy' (Mitra 2003: 414).

The relations between South Asia and Central Eurasia go back to antiquity. For instance, there is ample evidence to confirm the regular interactions between the inhabitants of North India and the Oxus civilization, whose members established a network of settlements across large parts of modern-day Afghanistan and Central Asia as far back as the Bronze Age (2300–1700 BCE). It is this extensive history that positions the region simultaneously as a source of opportunities and threats for India. This bifurcated framing can help explain some of the ambiguity underpinning New Delhi's current Central Eurasian outlook. The opportunities emerge from the exchanges of goods

and ideas associated with the scholarly, religious, and economic connections between India and Central Eurasia. Buddhism travelled out of India and through Central Asia spread to other parts of Asia. The Bamiyan Buddhas which stood in central Afghanistan since the beginning of the sixth century until their destruction by the Taliban in March 2001 were just one example of this heritage. Likewise, traders traversing the paths of the ancient Silk Road developed economic relations that exchanged not only goods, but also knowledge which assisted innovation and the development of new technologies. For instance, the *noria*—an ancient waterwheel for irrigation which pumped water out of rivers—offers an example of a device which (depending on the interpretation of historical evidence) either came to India via the Silk Road or originated in India and was then spread to other parts of the ancient world (Habib 2000). Also artists, priests, traders, and travellers—especially, during the Mughal period—journeyed between the main cities of Central and South Asia establishing an interconnected and interdependent network of cultural, economic, and political mutuality.

The framing of Central Eurasia as a threat reflects the experience of war and conflict. India has consistently been invaded from the north by armies passing through or originating in modern-day Afghanistan and Central Asia. In this respect, history seems to suggest that the region needs to be perceived as 'the conduit for destabilizing factors' for India (Bal 2004: 3). For instance, going back to the Vedic tradition, one of the foundation myths of contemporary India depicts the Indo-Aryan invasion of the subcontinent and the destruction of the local Dravidian population (Bergunder 2004). While the Indo-Aryan onslaught tends more often than not to get a positive spin in Indian historiography, subsequent ones have fared less favourably. The Kushan Empire is probably one of the earliest instances of many attempts to bring Central Eurasia and South Asia into a single polity. The Kushan polity had its origins in northern Afghanistan, but quickly moved to cover the territory of the post-Soviet states of Central Asia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and much of northern India's Gangetic Plain. As Robert D. Kaplan (2010: 9) insists, such expanse is not only 'mind-boggling', but the domain of the Kushan Empire comes to remind us that 'current borders do not necessarily indicate the last word in political organization of Central and South Asia'.

It was, however, with the advent of Islam in Central Eurasia that bilateral relations with the subcontinent gained particular significance to the imaginary of Indian strategic thinking. As Marlène Laruelle points out, while north India had been subjected to pillage by Turkic, Uzbek, and other Central Eurasian armies since the tenth century, it was the establishment of the Mughal Empire in the sixteenth century that constitutes 'the real jewel in the crown of historical arguments advanced by the Central Asian states and India alike in order to exalt their age-old traditions' (Laruelle 2011: 13). On the one hand during the more than three centuries of Mughal rule, a contiguous cultural space emerged between Central and South Asia, bringing together in creative interaction both regions. On the other hand, and this is where contemporary forms of Hindu nationalism become increasingly prominent, the Muslim conquest of South Asia led to the political, economic, and cultural devastation of the pre-Islamic culture of India. For instance, Nalanda University—deemed to have been the earliest university institution

in the world—was destroyed in the twelfth century by a Muslim general hailing from a village in modern-day Afghanistan.

It is in this setting that colonialism interjects itself as another complex factor that has important bearing on the history of the bilateral relationship. On the one hand, the establishment of the British Raj on the South Asian subcontinent during the nineteenth century altered qualitatively its relations with Central Eurasia. As a number of commentators have noted, through the establishment of a strong polity, the British managed to reverse the strategic calculus between the two regions to the extent that that probably for the first time in their relations it was India who was projecting hard power towards Central Eurasia. C. Raja Mohan (2004: 205–9) suggests that this shift is particularly associated with the British Viceroy, Lord Curzon, who championed a proactive 'forward foreign policy' strategy which allowed New Delhi to emerge 'as a catalyst in regional and international diplomatic and military affairs'. Thus, it was during the Raj that India recognized 'the strategic significance of looking beyond the northern borders over the Hindu Kush and the Pamirs into the heartland of Central Eurasia', which made possible the conversion of Afghanistan into a British protectorate, the opening up of Tibet, the expeditions into Xinjiang, and ultimately limiting the Russian influence by 'checkmating it with the creation of the Wakhan Corridor' (Bal 2004: 28).

On the other hand, it was this very colonial experience that paved the way for the gradual decoupling of Central Eurasia and South Asia. For instance, the Curzonian drive towards Central Eurasia was not motivated by a desire for closer relations between the two regions, but merely aimed to counter the southward advances of Russia. Thus, while South Asia became the proverbial 'jewel' in the crown of the British Empire, a significant part of Central Eurasia was gradually incorporated into the Tsarist Russian Empire, while the rest—namely, Afghanistan—became a buffer between these two colonial projects. While the separation between the two regions was neither immediate nor inevitable—in fact, contact persisted during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries—the bifurcation that it initiated became the blueprint for the geopolitical divisions that would splinter both Central Eurasia and South Asia in the post-colonial period. For instance, the 1893 Durand Line established by the British to distinguish their colonial possessions in South Asia from Afghanistan (which was also meant to guard the Raj from Russian threats) has never been recognized by Kabul and to this day serves as an obstacle to closer relations between Afghanistan and Pakistan (Omrani 2009). More importantly, the decolonization experience in both Central Eurasia and South Asia ensured that chance lines drawn on colonial maps will cut contact between these regions. In South Asia, the legacy of the 1947 Partition between Pakistan and India has profoundly scarred the relations between the two countries. It has also meant that India no longer has direct geographic access to Afghanistan and the countries of Central Asia as a result of its strategic confrontation with Pakistan. For Central Eurasia, the transformation of Tsarist Russia into the Soviet Union has led to the prioritization of Moscow in the geopolitical outlook of Central Asian states, which also severed the traditional connections between the Central Asian states with Afghanistan and South Asia for much of the Cold War period. It is this fraught and complex history that Indian policy-makers

often refer to when they assert the 'civilizational' proximity between India, Afghanistan, and the post-Soviet states of Central Asia. At the same time, the emphasis on the framing of history as a cultural capital belies New Delhi's realization that in its contest for influence with Pakistan, India lacks the resources to counter Pakistan's geographic advantages. In this setting, despite the underlying ambiguity about the region's positioning both as a threat and as an opportunity in New Delhi's strategic outlook, the emphasis on a shared cultural capital discloses a discursive strategy that aims 'to remind the new generations' in both Afghanistan and Central Asia that India is 'a very old friend' (Jain 2008: 210). While it is difficult to quantify the extent to which such cultural capital contributes to India's relations in Central Eurasia, it nevertheless creates a potent point of departure for rearticulating the country's position not only as a regional, but also as a global power.

Central Asia: From the 'Look North' to the 'Connect Central Asia' Policy

During a visit to Turkmenistan in September 1995, the then Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao announced that 'for India', Central Asia is an area 'of high priority, where we aim to stay engaged far into the future. We are an independent partner with no selfish motives. We only desire honest and open friendship and to promote stability and cooperation without causing harm to any third country.' Many consider Rao's proclamation as the discursive genesis of India's 'Look North Policy' (LNP)—a strategy intended to assist New Delhi in establishing a foothold in the region. However, more than 20 years after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the External Affairs Minister S. M. Krishna found himself urging Indian diplomats in early 2012 to begin converting the 'enormous goodwill' towards India in Central Asia into 'tangible and strategic advantages' (cited in M. S. Roy 2012).

This insistence indicates Indian frustration over the inability of the LNP to translate the country's perceived cultural capital into any meaningful influence in Central Asia. The explicit aim of the LNP was to establish India as a model for a secular, democratic, multicultural polity that the post-Soviet states of the region could emulate. In particular, India's strategic objective has been the 'consolidation of democratic and secular polities in Central Asia' as a bulwark against 'the rise of religious extremism' (Joshi 2003: 98). To that end, the LNP encouraged the evolution of regional cooperation in Central Asia. Indian observers have been concerned that in the absence of Central Asian cooperation, history might repeat itself and Central Asia may lose 'its creative capacity [just like it did] during the sixteenth century, owing to its internecine warfare, internal instability, and external aggressive policy' (Joshi 2003: 260). At the same time, the LNP intended to prime India for access to the rich hydro-carbon reserves of the region.

However, the low levels of trade between India and Central Asia seem to attest to New Delhi's inability to meaningfully accommodate the desire for a more assertive role on the global stage. Thus, as a result of this pervasive strategic ambiguity as well as a lingering perception that the region was still part of a Russian sphere of influence during the 1990s when the Central Asian states were eagerly looking for partners, India could not develop viable initiatives for closer relations. At the same time, India's failure to engage Central Asia is also a function of the South Asian constraints on India's foreign policy outlook—in particular, the formulation of New Delhi's external relations *in reaction to* Pakistan's foreign policy strategies. In 'Indian perceptions', Pakistan has 'vested interests' in pursuing a 'quest for strategic depth vis-à-vis India in Central Asia' (Roy and Kumar 2007: 150). India's LNP to Central Asia has therefore extended a '*non-Pakistani* alternative' to the region (Kavalski 2010: 86). This has been poignantly illustrated by the framing of Tajikistan as India's 'gateway to Central Asia' (Singh 2003: 153). Strategically speaking, it is the shared perception of external threats that appears to motivate India's bilateral relations with Tajikistan. Indian commentators explain that the civil war which ravaged the country during the 1990s has been '*caused* by a skilful exploitation of the inter-regional/inter-clan rivalries by forces of Islamic fundamentalism supported by the Pakistan-backed Mujahideen in Afghanistan' (Singh 2003: 39–40). As a result, India has provided materiel and logistic assistance to the anti-Taliban Northern Alliance during the 1990s as well as long-term military training to Tajikistan. In the process, India acquired exclusive access to the 'Ayni' airbase in Tajikistan. These developments seemed to indicate that the LNP is bearing fruit at least in one corner of the region. As one commentator put it, Indo-Tajik relations demonstrated that New Delhi's 'strategic aspirations are finally coming of age' (Aroor 2007). Yet, the much flaunted 'Indian' airbase at 'Ayni' was lost in 2011, when Tajikistan decided to discontinue the informal arrangement with India and offer the airbase to Russia (Kucera 2013). While India still maintains a squadron at the 'Farkhor' airbase in the south of Tajikistan, 'Ayni' was positioned as the centrepiece of its proactive Central Asian strategy and to that end India expanded substantial resources in renovating and upgrading the airbase.

This seems to have been the straw that broke the back of the LNP. Limited both by the 'ill-conceived [and] ill-executed treatment of Central Asia as a counterpoise between India and Pakistan' (Singh 1999: 111) and the very real geographic barrier posed by the Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, New Delhi was gradually forced to acknowledge that the LNP has failed to provide a viable policy *for* Central Asia. Thus, in June 2012, the Indian Ministry of External Affairs unveiled its 'Connect Central Asia Policy' (CCAP) as the foreign policy vehicle for its re-engagement with the region. Recognizing its latecomer status in regional affairs, the intention of CCAP is to allow India to carve out a space for its interests in Central Asia. In the words of Asoke Mukerji, the Special Secretary of the Ministry of External Affairs, CCAP aims to establish a 'new Silk Road independent of the traditional land routes' (Mukerji 2012). To that end, India intends to strengthen its strategic cooperation with the region by providing training for military personnel, IT and medical services, priority access for Central Asian students to Indian universities, and strengthening of economic ties.

Crucially, the improvement in trade relations is expected to occur not through bilateral interactions, but in tandem with the Chinese-led Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Russian-promoted Eurasian Economic Community. This is probably the closest that Indian foreign policy has come to recognizing that their country will be destined to play the second-fiddle to other regional players. While it is too early to say what the fate of CCAP will be, it appears to offer little innovation on the LNP (apart from re-invigorated rhetoric). Despite the proactive statements there is very little in terms of tangible deliverables for the countries of the region. Instead, it proposes a raft of initiatives which seem to lack focus and coherence and, crucially, do not seem to alleviate India's marginalization in Central Asia. In particular, the CCAP does not seem to present the regional states with meaningful alternative to China (and, especially, Chinese investment), which seems to have become Central Asia's preferred Asian partner (as well as a veritable alternative to—and occasionally bulwark against—the advances of their traditional 'big brother' Russia).

India and Afghanistan

During the morning rush-hour on 7 July 2008 the centre of Kabul city was rocked by a suicide bombing that destroyed the entrance to the Indian embassy in Afghanistan, killing nearly 60 individuals (including two of the highest ranking Indian representatives in the country), and injuring scores of others. While the attack marked the beginning of a Taliban resurgence which saw the increased targeting of 'non-military' targets, the fact that it was the Indian embassy that was chosen as a target seemed to offer a tacit acknowledgement of New Delhi's influence in the country. If the attackers were banking on curtailing Indian efforts, their attempt seems to have backfired—India's commitment to Afghanistan appears to have only been strengthened.

Just like its interactions with the post-Soviet countries of Central Asia, Indian relations with Afghanistan are steeped in history and attest to New Delhi's rivalry with Pakistan. Yet, these two ingredients seem to have produced (for the time being, at least) qualitatively different policy outcomes from the ones in Central Asia. In fact, it can be argued that Afghanistan is one of the few places in the world where Indian foreign policy has been able to gain significant foothold and actually demonstrate New Delhi's capacity to exert influence. There are perhaps three crucial factors that have assisted this development: (i) the perceived existential threat to India from failing statehood in Afghanistan is much more palpable than that from the Central Asian Republics; (ii) New Delhi and Islamabad seem to have been sparring over influence in Afghanistan ever since their independence; (iii) India does not have the same scruples about hurting Russian feelings as it has in Central Asia; and (iv) China has not been able to extend its outreach to the country to the same extent as it has done in the Central Asian states, which puts New Delhi and Beijing on more or less equal footing. As already indicated, India's relations with Afghanistan date back to antiquity. However, it is their interactions

in the post-colonial period that provides the immediate context for their current relations. It is often forgotten that Afghanistan was the only country to oppose Pakistan's membership of the UN in 1947 (Dar 1986: 143). During the Cold War, Afghanistan and India collaborated closely to curb Pakistan's regional influence by abetting the separatist struggle of disaffected Baluchi and Pashtun nationalists. The animosity between Pakistan and Afghanistan went so far that in 1961 both countries broke diplomatic relations and closed their border (Arnold 1981: 41). It was only in the context of the growing Soviet influence in (and subsequent invasion of) Afghanistan that during the 1970s some Afghan factions sought Pakistani assistance. India, on the other hand, continued its support for the pro-Soviet regime of President Mohammad Najibullah even after the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan. Consequently, after his brutal murder by the Taliban in 1996, India provided shelter for his family and supporters (Kavalski 2013).

This brief historical outline intends to suggest that from the late 1940s onward Afghanistan has gradually become the scene of probably the most protracted proxy war between India and Pakistan—a pattern that becomes increasingly obvious with the impending withdrawal of American and NATO forces from the country. It has to be remembered, however, that such proxy war is not symmetrical as India does not have the geographic advantage of direct land route to Afghanistan; which is why it has tended to favour the internationalization of regional tensions by involving other external actors. In this setting, it is possible to read developments in Afghanistan as a function of the larger geopolitical conflict between the two South Asian rivals. From India's point of view, both during and after the Cold War, such an outlook is a natural outcome of a simple strategic calculus—both the Mujahidin during the 1980s and the Taliban during the 1990s were backed by Pakistan and targeted Indian interests in the region. Especially after their ascendance to power in 1996, the Taliban provided training and support for a number of anti-Indian groups—such as Lashkar-e-Taiba (which carried out the 2008 Mumbai attacks). Afghanistan also became a staging ground for attacks on Indian Kashmir. In this respect, after 1996, India had few policy options but to support the anti-Taliban forces. Thus, until the terrorist attacks on the United States of 11 September 2001, India was the only democratic country to actively oppose the Taliban regime in Afghanistan (New Delhi had even managed to scramble a motley ad hoc alliance between Iran and Russia to assist with its struggle, which might be read as a forerunner to the 'coalitions of the willing' that the United States unleashed during its 'war on terror'). The subsequent policy shift in Washington seemed only to vindicate India's stance and has contributed significantly for the development of closer Indo-American bilateral relations.

It should not come as a surprise, therefore, that India's policies in Afghanistan have singled it out for an unusual level of terrorist attacks ever since the 1980s. Probably, one of the most prominent instances has been the hijacking of Indian Airlines Flight 814 (IC-814) by pro-Taliban terrorists on 24 December 1999. Taking off from Kathmandu (Nepal) for Delhi, the flight eventually landed in Kandahar (in the south of Afghanistan) where after six days of tense negotiations the passengers were released in exchange for three prominent Islamist militants who were serving time in Indian prisons. For India,

the hijack was a serious blow to its prestige—it was not only forced to negotiate with (even though without recognizing) the Taliban government, but the humiliation was made even more poignant by the fact that the then Indian External Affairs Minister, Jaswant Singh, had to escort personally the three Islamists to Afghanistan. Subsequently, one of them organized the kidnap and murder of the American journalist Daniel Pearl in Pakistan, another organized the 2001 attack on the Indian Parliament, which nearly set off a war between Pakistan and India, while the third one has been training militants for operations in Indian Kashmir (Fair 2014).

Since the ouster of the Taliban, Indian aid workers, businessmen, contractors, and diplomats have borne the brunt of consistent and targeted attacks. These attacks do not appear to have deterred India's involvement in Afghanistan. Building on its assistance and development programmes during the 1980s, India quickly unveiled a comprehensive and well-funded initiative for rebuilding Afghanistan's infrastructure and services following the ouster of the Taliban in 2001. New Delhi's has focused its programmes on four key areas: (i) humanitarian assistance; (ii) major infrastructure projects; (iii) small and community-based development; and (iv) education and capacity-building (A. B. Roy 2012: 141). New Delhi has so far contributed nearly $1.5 billion to projects across these four programme-areas, with a further half-a-billion committed until 2015. Afghanistan is also the largest recipient of international student scholarships offered by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (Price 2013: 9). India also played an instrumental role in securing Afghanistan's accession to the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) in 2007. At the same time, the well-known Indophile sentiments of President Hamid Karzai, who was educated in India (and bears a personal grudge against Pakistan's ISI for their alleged involvement in the murder of his father) have provided a further boon for India's influence in the country (Prabhakar 2003: 169).

These initiatives seem to have paid off—according to a 2010 ABC/BBC/ARD poll, 74 per cent of Afghans viewed India favourably, while only 8 per cent expressed similar feelings towards Pakistan. In particular, what appears to boost India's image is its policy of so-called *Afghanization*—that is, investing in capacity-building by putting Afghans in charge of the projects funded by India (from large-scale infrastructure programmes to the small-scale development and community-building initiatives) through unconditional 'no-strings-attached' direct payments—which distinguishes it from all other international donors (Peral 2012: 16). In this respect, India has managed to establish a positive image in Afghanistan by creatively drawing on the cultural capital provided by past experience and backing it up with a proactive strategy for developing close relations with representatives of both the central government and local authorities in Afghanistan. India, therefore has been able to position itself as an attractive model for a substantive part of the Afghan population as a result of its reconstruction and development projects (Górka-Winter 2012: 133). These developments offer ample evidence of India's potential and capacity to shoulder more responsibilities by making meaningful contributions to the peace and security of regional and international affairs.

However, as the 2011 Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) between New Delhi and Kabul has demonstrated, India's outreach is not unproblematic. With the looming

withdrawal of the International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) from Afghanistan by the end of 2014, Kabul pressed New Delhi for more robust military aid. This, however, has stirred up protracted debates on the nature of India's relations in its 'extended strategic neighbourhood'. While the 2011 SPA provides for Indian military assistance to Afghanistan, some Indian commentators have expressed concern that going down this path might aggravate further the country's relations with Pakistan, which could be counterproductive both to India's and Afghanistan's national interests. For this reason, apart from a police training unit and small paramilitary contingents involved solely in the protection of Indian facilities in Afghanistan, India has not contributed any combat troops to the ISAF forces. Moreover, India has balked at ongoing Afghan requests to purchase military hardware. In contrast, other Indian observers have argued that New Delhi should overcome its unease about Islamabad's feelings and offer Kabul direct military assistance if it wants to secure the beachhead that it has already made in the country in order to avoid a return to the 1990s status quo. In this setting, during his December 2013 visit to India, President Karzai managed to secure an enhanced defence commitment from India to develop the capabilities of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) by offering training 'on conduct of counter insurgency and counter terrorism operations, with special emphasis on operations in built-up areas and rural areas in a realistic environment' (Weitz 2014). Also, in early 2014, New Delhi concluded an arrangement with Moscow it will pay Russia to supply arms and equipment to the Afghan military (Miglani 2014).

Thus, while India has been making efforts to establish itself as a credible partner for Afghanistan's development, the debate on its military assistance to Kabul attests to the unfinished nature of its post-Cold War international identity formulation (Kavalski 2012). It is, perhaps, the post-2014 developments in Afghanistan that might urge India to demonstrate a policy that is closer to the robust rhetoric of its outreach to Central Eurasia. In January 2007, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh envisioned a regional relationship of seamless political and spatial interaction that would allow one to have 'breakfast in Amritsar, lunch in Lahore, and dinner in Kabul' (Raja Mohan 2007: 17). While there is little on the ground to suggest that this vision will be in the offing anytime soon, the conversations on the Turkmenistan–Afghanistan–Pakistan–India (TAPI) pipeline might offer some hope for an alternative future of cooperative relations between Central Eurasia and South Asia. Proposed in the mid-1990s, the 1,700 kilometres long pipeline will bring much-needed natural gas from Turkmenistan to the energy-hungry Pakistan and India. While construction work on the estimated $7.6 billion TAPI pipeline is expected to begin in 2017—more than two decades after it was suggested—the fact that the stakeholder nations have actually agreed to negotiate is already a significant achievement. In fact, according to insiders, the problem no longer seems to be the animosity between Islamabad and New Delhi, but Turkmenistan's awkward foreign policy. As the policy director at the Afghan mines ministry Abdul Jalil Jumriany acknowledged, 'Right now the ball is in Turkmenistan's court. Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India, all of them have thrown in their support as much as they can' (*Newsweek* 2013). The future of TAPI in many ways reflects the trajectories of India's outreach to Afghanistan—whether it

remains just another pipedream has a lot to do with India's capacity to develop a coherent international outlook matched by confident security profile in the country. Without such clarity, India's policy in Afghanistan might suffer a similar redundancy to the one that plagues its relations with the countries of Central Asia.

Conclusion

Indian policy-makers and pundits seem to treat the extensive history of interactions with Central Eurasia as a veritable shortcut for New Delhi's influence in the region. Thus, the analysis of India's engagement with the post-Soviet republics of Central Asia and Afghanistan reflects New Delhi's foreign policy desire to establish itself as 'a model for other countries' (Dutt 2006: 205). The proclivity towards a discursive projection of India as a blueprint for both the Central Asian states and Afghanistan has become a defining feature of its interactions with these countries. Yet, it would appear that in the post-Soviet republics of Central Asia, New Delhi has thus far failed to establish itself as a significant partner. In contrast, in Afghanistan, India is emerging as probably the most important regional donor. What are the implications of such outcomes for Indian foreign policy?

On the one hand, it seems that the complex reality of Central Asian affairs and the involvement of other international actors—especially, China—makes conspicuous that New Delhi still has a long way to go before it develops a coherent strategy for exerting meaningful influence on the world stage. Its interactions with the Central Asian states tend to demonstrate that India's external outreach lacks the capacity to project a consistent vision of world order that would distinguish it from the other participants in the regional 'new great game'. Consequently, the international identity of New Delhi does not seem to possess any distinct attributes that Central Asian actors might be tempted to emulate. The implication then is not only that India might remain a 'rising power' for longer than its pundits portend, but also that the inconsistencies of its external outlook puts it in 'the class of countries that are always emerging but never quite arriving' (Mitra 2003: 402).

On the other hand, India's engagement with Afghanistan demonstrates New Delhi's potential both for regional and global leadership. In particular, it indicates that India can live up to the expectations generated by the narratives of its rise to global prominence by projecting a viable 'alternative vision of a new world order' (Vohra and Gosh 2008: 10). The availability of such a model—a *Pax Indica*, if you will—suggests that India 'can change enough' to become a pole of attraction in an international environment marked by 'extreme turbulence' (Kachru 2007: 14). The challenge seems to be whether New Delhi is able: (i) to maintain its appeal and commitment in Afghanistan, especially after the withdrawal of American and NATO troops; and (ii) to draw on its experience in Afghanistan and apply it to the rest of India's foreign policy engagements. As demonstrated by India's engagement in Afghanistan, however, *Pax Indica* emerges not as a

fixed and inflexible set of standards of international behaviour that others will have to comply with and abide by, but a fluid practice whose meaning emerges in the process of New Delhi's interaction with other international actors.

In this respect, New Delhi's interactions with the Central Asian states and Afghanistan expose the bifurcation underpinning not just in its Central Eurasian outlook, but India's external affairs (Kavalski 2011). For instance, India's involvement in Central Asia reveals that its international outreach appears still to be plagued by a 'post-dated self-image'—that is, the palpable confidence among many in India that the country is destined for great power status and therefore they 'want others to treat them as if they had in fact already arrived' (Nayar and Paul 2003: 47). The expectation therefore is that others will follow New Delhi's lead without the provision of inducements or reinforcements. Yet, as made conspicuous by India's experience in Afghanistan, it is the very ability to offer credible commitments that underpins India's regional and international appeal. In this respect, India's involvement in Central Eurasia offers a good illustration of the crossroads which New Delhi's foreign policy is facing—either keep on proliferating discourses that spin yarns of the international influence of its historical capital or develop proactive diplomatic strategies that actually deliver the international status that India desires. While one is tempted to encourage India's foreign policy pundits to take the latter road, India's Central Eurasian outreach offers ample evidence that the direction of its prospective foreign policy trajectories is far from certain.

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CHAPTER 32

THE GULF REGION

TALMIZ AHMAD

Introduction

The Persian Gulf, with an area of 251,000 km^2, has witnessed the great civilizations of Mesopotamia and Persia, and has nurtured the maritime engagements of the Persian and Arab peoples with the rest of Asia for over 4,000 years. As the hinterland on the Arabian side is an arid desert, the Arab people have been able to sustain normal life only through interactions with the port cities of Mesopotamia, Persia, and South Asia, in Sindh, Kutch, and Malabar. Their commercial, religious, intellectual, and cultural ties with South Asia over several centuries enriched the ethos of the Arab and South Asian communities and imparted to them a sense of community. As Indian Vice President, Mr Hamid Ansari, has put it eloquently, 'Locating the Gulf in relation to India is an exercise in geography and history … [when] contacts were embedded in a trading relationship that, of necessity, went beyond a mere exchange of commodities' (Ansari 2007: 275).

Over the last one hundred years, this waterway has been in the vortex of global geopolitical and geoeconomic competitions which have imparted to the region volatility, insecurity, and turbulence. Its reserves of two-thirds of global hydrocarbons, the essential fuel for modern-day economic development, have in recent years yielded enormous financial resources to the native populations and given to their leaders considerable influence in world affairs, even as the contentions for power and influence have lured outside powers to the region, who influence the littoral states and their neighbourhood. This region is crucial for India's interests, but these interests have to be defined and articulated in an environment of uncertainty and contention, and its diplomacy has to navigate skilfully through challenges that severely test the nation's values, resilience, and, above all, imagination.

The Gulf Security: Raj Legacy

Over the last few hundred years, the Gulf region witnessed an extensive involvement of foreign powers which had been motivated by three considerations: trade, political rivalry with other powers, and the need to maintain imperial interests. The last had required successive powers to address issues relating to their frontiers, the pursuit of 'forward policies' to consolidate and promote their interests, and, above all, the establishment and protection of lines of communications in the region (Peterson 2001). And India indeed was central to these developments:

> For over 4000 years, Arabia fell within the economic and cultural orbit of India. During the British raj, it also fell within the political orbit of India. Between 1820 and 1947, its political affairs were dominated by the East India Company and its successor, the British Government of India. Arabia was the Western—most frontier of the British Indian Empire. (Onley 2007: vii)

Frontiers, Lord Curzon, the viceroy in India at the beginning of the twentieth century, dramatically stated, are 'the razor's edge on which hang suspended the modern issues of war and peace, of life or death to nations' (Onley 2007: viii). The Indian 'frontier' in the Persian Gulf kept open the lines of communication from Britain to its Indian empire; it also kept at bay elements with hostile intentions: first the Ottomans, and later the French, the Russians, and the Germans.

The interests of British India in the waters and littoral states of the Persian Gulf were founded on a series of treaty arrangements that British India entered into with local rulers, and were asserted through a large number of diplomats, civil servants, and armed forces personnel, mainly deployed from and funded from India. They functioned from residencies, political agencies, and native agencies across the Gulf, with the British Residents and Agents exercising powers 'as both political representatives and imperial officials' (Onley 2007: 2). These officials were an integral part of the local political structures in the Gulf, setting up, in Onley's words, 'a collaborative power triangle between the Resident, his native agents, and the rulers that maintained the British-political authority in the Gulf' (Onley 2007: 3; Onley 2009).

The present-day security scenario in the Gulf continues to be shaped by concerns pertaining to trade and the management of political rivalries and lines of communications. The principal item of trade from the beginning of the twentieth century has been oil: from 1912, when the British navy shifted from coal to oil to power its ships, to the present, over a hundred years later, the Gulf has received undivided international attention as this fuel became crucial not just for the Western military effort during the two world wars, but also for the Western reconstruction programme after the Second World War and the emergence of Western Europe and the United States as developed economies. From the end of the last century, Gulf energy resources have become crucial factors in sustaining the national development of Asian economies.

The importance of the fuel from the Gulf has encouraged an external military presence to ensure the security of the production centres and the polities that produce it, and the safe movement of the fuel to Western markets which, till about 20 years ago, consumed the bulk of the region's produce.

In January 1968, Britain declared that it would withdraw from the Gulf sheikhdoms by the end of 1971, thus ending its political presence of over 200 years. In its death throes, the departing imperial power supervised the coming of age of the Gulf sheikhdoms it had dominated politically, economically, and administratively, by facilitating the drawing of national boundaries and giving the nascent states the institutions of modern governance. The former Trucial states now constituted the United Arab Emirates (made up of seven sheikhdoms), while Oman, Qatar, Bahrain, and Kuwait became separate sovereign entities. British political hegemony over the Gulf was now assumed by the United States.

The interests of the Western hegemons in the Gulf were not just confined to the safe flow of oil; they were also concerned that internal or external elements hostile to them should not challenge their predominant position in the region. During the Cold War, the principal threat came from the Soviet Union and its allies. Hence, Western policy-makers feared that the entry of Soviet troops into Afghanistan presaged a move to the 'warm waters' of the Indian Ocean, including those of the Gulf. After the Cold War, Western security concerns principally originated in the actions of regional players seen as hostile to their interests.

The Islamic revolution of 1979 and the challenge the Iranian regime posed to the local Gulf sheikhdoms and to Western interests had three immediate implications for the regional strategic scenario: first, Saudi Arabia and the Arab sheikhdoms aligned themselves, in 1981, into a cohesive regional entity, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). In regard to political and military matters,the GCC was largely a consultative body but also one that would promote cooperation in respect of other matters of interest to its members in economic, fiscal, commercial, infrastructure, health, education, and cultural areas.

Secondly, the Gulf sheikhdoms, in association with the principal Western countries, encouraged Iraq to stem the tide of the Islamic revolution by providing the country with finance and weaponry to take on its eastern neighbour in an eight-year conflict through the 1980s. Thirdly, the Islamic revolution and the ferocity of the Iraq–Iran War, which included skirmishes in the Gulf waters, a tanker war, and even a temporary closure of the Straits of Hormuz, provided the opportunity for the American navy to set up a permanent base for itself in Bahrain, build up powerful military forces across the region and, thus, establish a hegemony across the Gulf waters just as the British had done over a hundred years earlier. What had earlier been a 'British lake' was now an 'American lake'.

US-led military forces were further expanded after Iraq's occupation of Kuwait in 1990, and remained in position in the region even after the occupation had been reversed. Following the events of 9/11, the 'Bush Doctrine' articulated during this period asserted that the United States would be the predominant regional power with the sanction to effect pre-emptive military interventions 'to shape the politics and historic

contours of the region' in line with US interests, as Gary Sick has put it (Sick 2014; Pincus 2013).

Reconnecting Independent India

India's ties with the countries of the Gulf developed within the framework of the evolving security scenario in the region. India has had an unbroken commercial and civilizational connectivity with the peoples of the Gulf and the Arabian Peninsula for over four millennia (Tharoor 2012: 159–63). With the advent of the colonial era, while the control over the sea routes passed into European hands, the movement of goods and peoples between South and West Asia continued. In the late eighteenth century, once the British had obtained political control over India, they established their political and commercial sway over the Gulf to command the land and sea routes to India.

Independent India did not seek to inherit the political and military hegemony that Britain had exercised in the Gulf over the previous 200 years. Instead, it went back to the pre-colonial ties it had had with the Gulf in terms of which it provided the region with the required items of necessity (foodstuffs), comfort (textiles), and luxury (jewellery and silk). On their part, the Arab sheikhdoms saw India as their principal commercial partner, cultural font, medical centre, and tourist destination.

In the 1950s, political ties between India and the Arabian Gulf states flourished in spite of Pakistan's hostility to India, when it made strenuous attempts to mobilize support for itself on the Kashmir issue. Its membership of the Baghdad Pact alienated it both from the Arab revolutionary regimes and the traditional monarchies. On the other hand, India's anti-colonial posture and its staunch support for the Palestine cause had a positive resonance among the Arab states (Pasha 2007: 129–30).

After the defeat of the Egyptian forces in the 1967 war with Israel and Nasser's death in 1970, Saudi Arabia, following the attack on the Al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem in August 1969, took the initiative to promote pan-Islamic solidarity, which culminated in the setting up of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) in May 1971, in which, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan came to play an important role. At the conference convened in Rabat in September 1969 to shape the institutionalization of this pan-Islamic project, the Indian delegation, after having been formally invited, was on Pakistan's insistence forced to leave the conclave.

Saudi–Pak ties were further strengthened after the Islamic revolution in Iran, with Pakistan providing extensive military training to Saudi personnel and Saudi Arabia funding Pakistani arms purchases from the United States. From 1968, Pakistan also stationed about 20,000 troops in Saudi Arabia which were deployed at the kingdom's borders with Jordan, Iraq, and Yemen, an arrangement that continued up to 1988.

Separately, a development that had a significant impact on the traditional Indian presence in the Gulf was the decision of the Arab oil producers, led by Saudi Arabia, to use the oil weapon against the West by withholding oil supplies and significantly increasing

oil prices. With the consequent generation of unprecedented revenues, the Gulf countries embarked upon massive national development projects, depending primarily on Western technology, investment, and professional and entrepreneurial resources. From being the principal source of goods and cultural comfort, India now became a provider of blue-collar workers who thronged into the region in their hundreds of thousands, while the region became the principal provider of hydrocarbon resources to India.

In the political arena, India was further alienated from the Gulf Arab states by the decision of the latter to promote a 'global jihad' in Afghanistan in association with Pakistan and the United States. The battlefields of Afghanistan attracted hundreds of Arab Afghan fighters from practically every country in West Asia–North Africa (WANA), besides several thousand Pakistani nationals, and solidified the political and military alliance of the Arab Gulf countries with Pakistan. India on the other hand found itself in the rival camp, which, with the Soviet Union and Iran, opposed the jihad. Later, after the Soviet withdrawal, India and Iran actively supported the Northern Alliance against the Pak-backed Taliban fighting force. Thus, through the 1980s and 1990s, India's political ties with the Arabian Gulf countries were lukewarm.

A major irritant for India from 1990 was the systematic use of the OIC platform by Pakistan to castigate India through a series of long-winded, vituperative, and utterly one-sided resolutions on the Kashmir issue, the destruction of Babri Masjid, and the plight of the Muslim minority in the country in general. The efforts of Indian political leaders and diplomats to explain the Indian position among member countries had no effect, with most members simply saying that the resolutions did not reflect their national positions and that, in any case, the OIC had no provision for a member to reject or even amend resolutions introduced by another member against a non-member. Even if this explanation was factually accurate, large sections of Indian opinion just could not understand how avowedly close friends could allow such abusive and patently unfair resolutions to pass. Finally, in early 2000, a decision was taken by then External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh to dismiss the resolutions with a short statement and avoid a detailed rebuttal. Over the next couple of years, an attempt was made by friendly Gulf countries to promote 'observer' status for India at the OIC, but the initiatives made no headway in the face of Pakistani opposition and Saudi reluctance to alienate its strategic ally. In time, India itself came to see the OIC as an ineffectual even irrelevant body in world affairs, and dropped all attempts at serious engagement with it.

The one exception in the arid terrain of political ties with the Arab sheikhdoms was the visit of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in April 1982 to Saudi Arabia, the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister to the kingdom since 1956. During this visit, an attempt was made to build up a solid political partnership that would link the two Asian giants while excluding foreign forces from the Gulf and the Indian Ocean. These intentions were articulated in the joint communiqué issued at the end of the visit, which inter alia stated:

> The Crown Prince [Fahd of Saudi Arabia] particularly welcomed the visit of Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi to Saudi Arabia at this critical juncture when the prevailing hostilities and tension in the region posed a very grave threat to regional and

> international peace. *The Crown Prince and the Prime Minister recognized that the stability and security of the Gulf region and that of the Indian Sub-continent were closely interlinked.* [Emphasis added]

Whatever may have been in the mind of the Indian and Saudi leaders at that time, the fact remains that nothing concrete emerged to bring the two countries closer. Perhaps, the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan constituted a political chasm that just could not be bridged, so that India quickly reaffirmed its strategic links with the Soviet Union, while Saudi Arabia went along with the United States and Pakistan in pursuing the jihad in Afghanistan. However, the idea contained in the communiqué did not die; it was resurrected nearly 30 years later in more propitious regional circumstances.

Expanding Economic Engagement

Though in the 1990s India's political ties with the Gulf countries were relatively low-key, the period witnessed a dramatic upswing in India's energy and economic ties with the region and in the presence of its community, so that today these ties constitute the most significant aspect of India's external economic relations. In 2012–13, the GCC provided 82 million tonnes, while the Gulf as a whole exported 120 million tonnes crude oil to India, about 64 per cent of India's total imports. Obviously, the Gulf also benefits considerably from India's oil imports: out of India's total bill on account of oil and gas imports of over $150 billion, nearly $98 billion went to West Asian suppliers in 2012–13 (Roy 2013b: 73).

India's trade scenario with the GCC has also experienced a dramatic upsurge. India's exports to the GCC went from $7 billion in 2003–4 to $51 billion in 2012–13, while imports went from $3.25 billion in 2003–4 to $108 billion in 2012–13, yielding a total bilateral trade with the GCC of $158.4 billion (Rizvi 2013: 92). It is important to note that for the last few years, the GCC has been India's number one trade partner among economic groupings, ahead of the EU, ASEAN, and North America. Country-wise, the UAE is India's number one trade partner and export destination.

India's two-way trade with Iraq has gone from $7.1 billion in 2007–8 to $21.4 billion in 2012–13, mainly made up of oil imports. Trade with Iran has been affected by sanctions: it went from $12.8 billion in 2007–8, to a peak of $16 billion in 2011–12, after this, due to reduced oil imports, it came down to $15 billion in 2012–13 (Rizvi 2013: 106). In 2012–13, India's two-way trade with the Gulf countries as a whole (i.e. GCC *plus* Iran and Iraq) amounted to nearly $200 billion.

Until recently, India's economic links with the Gulf were primarily a buyer–seller relationship, with India buying energy resources and selling some traditional items such as foodstuffs, textiles, and precious jewellery, with some new items like petroleum products and engineering goods. Since the turn of the century, major efforts have been made to impart a more durable character to the ties on the basis of joint ventures and

investments, which are also seen as an essential aspect of the emerging strategic partnerships India is building with the regional states. These efforts have met with some success (Ahmad 2013).

The Oman–India fertilizer project, initially valued at about $1 billion, is the best example of a mutually beneficial venture, where the entire production of urea and ammonia is exported to India. The total value of Indo-Omani joint ventures is well over $7.5 billion, with Indian investments in Oman being about $5 billion. In Saudi Arabia, the Saudi Arabian General Investment Authority (SAGIA) has licensed nearly 600 Indian small and medium-sized ventures valued at over $2 billion. Both Omani and UAE investors have also been quite active in India: Oman has invested in the Bharat–Oman refinery in Bina, while UAE enterprises are developing five ports and upmarket properties in different parts of the country.

Recognizing India's economic success, as exemplified by its high growth rates, sovereign wealth funds of the GCC and a large number of private investors have made long-term investments in India's buoyant equity markets, while Indians have invested heavily in the region's real estate sector, particularly in Dubai. With over 1,100 flights from GCC countries to several Indian destinations per week, India is steadily recovering its position as the business, cultural, and health partner for the local population, thus giving a contemporary value to age-old ties.

Indian Workers

While the participation of Indian companies in Gulf projects has been relatively modest compared to other Asian companies, India has made up for this through the presence of its community. The employment of Indians in large numbers in the GCC commenced with the oil boom in the early 1970s when the Arabian Gulf countries embarked on massive projects to develop their energy, infrastructure and welfare facilities. Today, the number of Indians in the GCC countries is about 7 million, and Indians are the number one community in every country of the GCC. Since the early 1990s there has been a change in its composition: in 1990, it was 90 per cent blue-collar, now (2014) it is 70 per cent blue-collar, while 20 per cent is made up of professionals and their family members. This remarkable preference for Indians has resulted from their technical competence, their high level of discipline, their non-involvement in criminal activity, and, above all, the fact that they have no interest in local politics. The Indian community in the GCC remits to India about $30–5 billion annually. Thus, the value of India's two-way trade with the Gulf and the remittances of its community yield an annual financial value for the bilateral relationship of about $235 billion, which compares favourably with India's ties with every other region in the world. Stronger economic ties have also produced significant changes India's political ties with the Gulf countries. India's rapid economic growth and technological advances since the early 1990s, the enduring success of the Indian democracy, its commitment to pluralism amidst growing violent extremism, and its impressive international engagement

encouraged the GCC countries to view India in a new light and look beyond the sale of oil and supply of labour.

Enhanced Bilateral Engagement

Saudi Arabia

With Saudi Arabia, the biggest challenge for India to develop political ties was to clear a number of cobwebs that had accumulated over the previous decades. This was effected during the visit to Riyadh of External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh in January 2001, the first-ever visit of an Indian foreign minister to Saudi Arabia. The Saudi Foreign Minister, Prince Saud Al-Faisal, first addressed the 'Kashmir' issue: he read out a carefully prepared statement before the Indian minister which emphasized that the issue would have to be addressed and resolved bilaterally between India and Pakistan. He then robustly got rid of the bogey of Pakistan that had bedevilled Indo-Saudi ties by pointing out that the kingdom viewed relations with India as important in themselves, not to be influenced by its ties with any other country.

Though further political interaction between India and the kingdom was delayed to some extent by the events of 9/11, in January 2006, King Abdullah visited India as the chief guest at the country's Republic Day, the first visit to India of a Saudi monarch since King Saud's visit in 1955. He signed the 'Delhi Declaration' with the Indian Prime Minister, which committed the two countries to the realization of a 'strategic energy partnership'. During the period 2005–8, the head of state or government from every GCC country visited India, with India reciprocating in full measure (Pradhan 2013: 13).

India's ties with the GCC were further boosted when the GCC countries began to have serious concerns about the turbulent political situation in Pakistan and its sponsorship of extremist elements in the region, as evidenced most dramatically by the assault upon Mumbai in November 2008. Saudi Arabia now took the lead in pursuing a 'strategic partnership' with India on the basis of expansion of ties in political, security, economic, and cultural areas. This was set out in the 'Riyadh Declaration', concluded between the Indian Prime Minister and the Saudi monarch in February 2010, which had as its subtitle: 'A New Era of Strategic Partnership'. The immediate achievement of this visit was intelligence-sharing in regard to extremist elements operating in South Asia and the Arabian peninsula and enhanced defence cooperation.

The Riyadh Declaration affirmed the Indo-Saudi alliance 'against the scourge of extremism and terrorism', and envisaged increased interaction on the basis of dialogue, joint exercises, naval cooperation, training and supply of equipment. The visit of Indian defence minister A. K. Anthony to Riyadh in February 2012 set out the road map for bilateral cooperation in specific areas such as mountain warfare and joint exercises of the various wings of the armed forces (Agarwal 2013: 50).

Over the last few years, other GCC countries have also reached out to India to deepen bilateral security cooperation.India had entered into a defence cooperation agreement with Oman in 1972, but defence ties received a fillip in 2005 when the MOU on defence cooperation was concluded. It provided for: joint exercises, training, and sharing of expertise in IT. The air forces of the two countries conducted joint exercises in October 2009. A Military Cooperation Committee has been set up to promote ties (Agarwal 2013: 51).

Similarly, with the UAE India has a Joint Defence Cooperation Committee to promote ties. While naval cooperation is ongoing with regular visits of ships, uniquely, the two countries conducted a joint air force exercise in September 2008 in which Indian Sukhoi aircraft were involved. In November 2008, India and Qatar concluded agreements on defence and security cooperation covering: maritime security, intelligence-sharing in regard to terrorism, cross-border crime, and money laundering (Agarwal 2013: 52). It is interesting to note that these burgeoning India–GCC security and defence ties recall the scenario envisioned in the Indo-Saudi joint communiqué of 1982 when the Indian and Saudi leaders had recognized that the security of South Asia and the Arabian peninsula is interlinked.

Iran

India's ties with the GCC countries have had to take into account India's interests in expanding economic and political ties with Iran in a scenario that has consisted of increasing US-led Western hostility to Iran and more recently after the Arab Spring, the deepening sectarian and strategic divide between Iran and the GCC countries led by Saudi Arabia.

In the 1960s, though Iran was firmly in the Western camp in the Cold War, economic ties between India and Iran flourished, with the purchase of Iranian crude by India and the agreement to set up a joint venture refinery in India in 1965 (Ansari 2007: 278). India was able to establish good ties with the Islamic regime in Iran in 1979, but the substance of the relationship was severely restricted by the Iraq–Iran War from 1980, mainly due to the need for India to maintain a balanced diplomatic position between the contending parties (Ansari 2007: 279).

The period of the 1990s saw a convergence of interests between the two countries in opposing the emergence of the Taliban in Afghanistan and backing the Northern Alliance. With the commencement of the new millennium, political ties received a fillip with the visit to Tehran of Prime Minister Vajpayee and the conclusion of the Tehran Declaration in 2001. The Declaration committed the two countries to expand energy and commercial ties, mainly through the development of the North–South transport corridor which would establish connectivities from Iranian ports to Central Asia, Russia, and Europe (Cheema 2014b: 116–17).

Following the events of 9/11, India and Iran supported the US-led assault on the Taliban in Afghanistan and extended considerable political and economic support to

the Karzai government. Bilateral ties peaked in 2003, with the visit of President Khatami as the chief guest for India's Republic Day. The 'New Delhi Declaration' concluded during the visit moved the relationship to a strategic level with the assertion that the two countries' 'strategic convergence needs to be underpinned with a strong economic relationship', particularly with the operationalization of the North–South corridor and enhanced defence cooperation (Ansari 2007: 282; Cheema 2014b: 117).

During this period, even as the United States increased its hostility to Iran due to concerns about its nuclear weapons programme, India's energy security interests encouraged the enhancement of energy ties by increasing imports of oil so that, by 2010, Iran had become India's second largest oil supplier.

At the same time, there is no denying the fact that the steady progress in Indo-US relations from 2005 onwards did have a deleterious effect on Indo-Iran ties. The dialogue with the United States on civilian nuclear cooperation required India to vote for the IAEA resolution in September 2005, that found Iran in 'non-compliance' of its safeguard obligations under the NPT, and later, in February 2006 to vote to refer Iran to the UN Security Council (UNSC) for violating its obligations, thus exposing Iran to UNSC sanctions. In November 2009, India again voted against Iran on an IAEA resolution, though at this time the Indian delegate forcefully affirmed Iran's right to the peaceful development of nuclear energy (Cheema 2014a: 31–3).

Since 2010, Indo-Iran ties have then been adversely affected by the increasingly stringent sanctions passed by the United States and the European Union, leading to a steady reduction in India's imports of Iranian oil. Thus, while in 2010 Iran met 11 per cent of India's oil import requirements and was India's number two supplier (supplying 350–400,000 barrels/day), in 2013 it slipped to seventh position, supplying just 6 per cent of India's oil imports, about 200,000 barrels/day. Western sanctions also placed serious restrictions on the transportation of Iranian oil to India, the insurance of ships, and payments for the imported oil (Cheema 2014b: 118–23). However, given the compulsions of India's energy security and its reluctance to be subject to unilateral Western sanctions, both Iran and India have come up with creative measures to maintain ties till the sanctions are eased following the US–Iran thaw from September 2013.

Regardless of the impediments placed by Western sanctions, India–Iran ties are based on 'deep strategic considerations' emerging from India's vision of its role in regional affairs:

> India seeks an outward expansion of power, beginning with 'soft hegemony' over the sub-continental neighbours as well as islands in the Indian Ocean, extending it to the proximate neighbourhoods of West Asia, Central Asia and South-East Asia. In all these geopolitical theatres, India aspires to convert borders into frontiers, not through military might but by instituting vigorous economic interaction, greater connectivity through transportation and establishment of critical energy links. (Cheema 2014b: 119)

Specifically, in its immediate neighbourhood in the West, India would like to establish an influential position in Afghanistan and have close political, energy, and economic

ties with the Central Asian Republics. Iran has a central role in realizing both interests (Cheema 2014b: 127).

Since 2001, both Iran and India have invested heavily in Afghanistan. Now, in direct competition with Pakistan, both countries are pledged to keeping the Taliban at bay in the post-Karzai order, bound together by shared concerns relating to radical terror promoted by Pakistani agencies at the Pak–Afghan border and in large parts of Afghanistan itself. Iran and India have set up joint working groups to address their concerns relating to terrorism and the narcotics trade, both of which are closely associated with the Taliban (Cheema 2014a: 38).

Again, the international North–South transport corridor, being built jointly by Iran and India, is crucial to establishing connectivities with Afghanistan and Central Asia. The development of Chahbahar port in this regard has both commercial and strategic significance. Besides being the hub for the transport of Indian goods northwards, it also balances China's influence at the Pakistan port of Gwadar, just 72 km away. In August 2012, India, Iran, and Afghanistan set up a joint working group to monitor and speed up development of Chahbahar and the road and rail connections (Cheema 2014b: 119–21).

Following the interim nuclear agreement between the P5+1 and Iran in November 2013, India announced that it would pay Iran $1.5 billion for oil imports out of the total outstanding bill of $5.3 billion. Again, in January 2014, India imported 412,000 barrels/day of Iranian oil as against just 189,000 barrels/day in December 2013. The Iranian foreign minister, Mohammed Javed Zareef, visited Delhi in February 2014 to discuss Afghanistan, terrorism, and the enhancement of energy and economic ties.

Thus, important strategic considerations and deft diplomacy have enabled India to navigate successfully between its ties with the United States and Iran: while serving its strategic, energy, and economic interests through enhanced ties with Iran, India has ensured that it does not incur American ire by pursuing nuclear or defence cooperation with the Islamic republic (Cheema 2014a: 40; Roy 2013a; Vakhshouri 2014).

Iraq

India's links with Iraq date back to the early twentieth century when Iraqi affairs were largely the responsibility of the Government of British India. During the period of the Iraqi monarchy (1932–58), Indians were deployed in large numbers in the development of the country's educational, industrial, and financial setup. After 1958, political ties flourished due to India's principled support for the new regimes that emerged from the revolutions of 1958 and 1968.

Through the 1970s and 1980s, unlike other Gulf countries where, after the oil boom, national development projects were mainly awarded to Western companies, in Iraq Indian companies won a large number of projects. Again, Iraq was the one Gulf country that welcomed military cooperation with India, so that army and air force training teams were deployed in the country up to 1990. During this period, Iraq also emerged as the number one supplier of oil to India.

Through the 1990s, UN sanctions severely restricted Indo-Iraqi economic linkages, though connectivities were maintained through the revival of the joint commission in 1998 and exchange of visits of parliamentary delegations. In recent years, with the revival of the Iraqi oil industry, Iraq has steadily increased its exports to India and has now replaced Iran at the number two position. Exports to India of Iraqi oil went up from 13 million tonnes in 2006–7 to 24 million tonnes in 2012–13, yielding revenues of $20 billion to Iraq.

In strategic terms, Iraq has been India's land frontier in the west, supported by political and economic ties that at one time had far greater substance than India's links with any other entity in the region. As Iraq emerges from the consequences of physical and institutional destruction and remoulds its polity in coming years into robust nationhood, there is little doubt that these traditional Indo-Iraqi ties will re-emerge and impart considerable economic and strategic value to both sides.

New Challenges and Imperatives

In the wake of the Arab Spring and the political turmoil generated by it, India has maintained the closest possible ties with all the countries of the Gulf in spite of turmoil in the region. This period has seen exchanges of high-level visits and substantial dialogue on security, energy, trade, investment, and community-related issues, in short, covering the entire gamut of issues of common interest. From the GCC, India has hosted the King and Crown Prince of Bahrain; the Prime Minister of Kuwait, and the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia. There have also been several exchanges between foreign ministers and national security advisers, and also of economic ministers.

From Iraq, India hosted then Prime Minister, Mr Nouri Al-Maliki, in August 2013, who came with a major business delegation. This was followed by the visit to Baghdad of the Indian External Affairs Minister in June 2013, and the incoming visit of Iraq's national security adviser in December 2013. In regard to Iran, there have been regular meetings of foreign ministers and the technical committees handling specific projects of bilateral interest.

The frequency and substance of these interactions affirm the importance attached by all the Gulf countries to ties with India, even when some of India's interlocutors have serious differences with each other; Gulf governments, in short, are both Indian-friendly and India-friendly. However, important developments in the region and within several polities now present new challenges to India and call for a new, more active role.

The security scenario in the Gulf is turbulent due to a number of factors, including: the Saudi–Iran divide; doctrinal and political competitions among different Islamic forces represented by Wahhabiya, the Muslim Brotherhood, a variety of Salafi groups, and, above all, al Qaeda and its affiliates and franchises; the increasingly active role in regional affairs of non-Arab players—Israel, Turkey, and Iran; and, above all, the

emergence of new US–Russian strategic contentions in West Asia as part of their larger competition across Eurasia.

Besides these regional developments, the new Indian role would also have to take into account the significant changes that are taking place *within* the regional polities, particularly the GCC countries. *First*, having enjoyed the fruits of oil revenues for over 40 years, national populations now have aspirations that can no longer be fulfilled by traditional paternalistic but authoritarian rulers; with increasing desire for political participation, the existing political models in the GCC are no longer sustainable.

Second, the GCC economies too are also under stress: the attempts of rulers to obtain domestic allegiance through large-scale welfare and development activity has put extraordinary pressure on oil-generated financial resources. The opaque and patronage-based rentier economic order cries out for reform just as the political order does.

Third, the status quo is under challenge from new domestic constituencies—religious and liberal activists; women and youth who are familiar with global trends and the instruments of modern technology; and businesspeople and professionals who want a more transparent and fair system that enables them to fulfil their potential. In general, in the GCC there is now a populace that seeks widespread economic reform and wants to breathe the air of freedom, democracy, and dignity now brought close to home by the promise of the Arab Spring (Wehrey 2014: 3).

Given these momentous changes, in its engagements with the region Indian diplomacy will have to move beyond interactions with governments and engage with these new constituencies that will assume leadership positions when a new regional order emerges.

While Indian foreign policy has traditionally been non-prescriptive and non-intrusive, India has retained the right to articulate its views on its larger concerns that impact on regional and global interests. Thus, India cannot but be concerned about the expansion of extremist influence across West Asia and the burgeoning scourge of sectarianism. Both of these challenges to the regional order emerge from Saudi–Iran differences; hence, it is here that the Indian diplomatic effort has to be most active.

Even before the recent thaw in US–Iran relations, a number of American and Gulf observers had noted the limitations of the US-led hegemonic security structure in the Gulf and had suggested an alternative cooperative Gulf security arrangement that would embrace all the countries of the region as also external role-players with an interest in the region's security (Hunter 2010; Pollack 2012; Al-Ansari 2009; Al-Marhoum 2010). Given the hostility among the region's principal nations and the ongoing contentions between them, shaping such an alternative framework would require an active external catalyst. Such a catalytic role in promoting an inclusive Gulf security arrangement can be assumed by India, acting in concert with principal Asian countries—China, Japan, and Republic of Korea.

These countries are central to the aspirations to make the twenty-first century an 'Asian century' on the basis of their historic civilizational status and their present political and economic standing. At the same time, each of them is engaged with the Gulf with

substantial energy and economic ties, which are crucial for them to attain the growth rates and economic achievement which form the bases of their influence in world affairs.

Given the fact that its crucial long-term interests have an abiding connectivity with Gulf stability, India does not have the option of being a passive bystander in regional affairs. It has to participate in defining and realizing an alternative security order that would pull the Gulf countries together in an architecture that embraces the principal regional and extra-regional players, facilitated by a consensual promotion of the idea by four of the most important Asian countries. In coming years, this will be one of the most important and exciting challenges for Indian diplomacy in the Gulf.

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CHAPTER 33

INDIA'S 'LOOK EAST' POLICY

AMITAV ACHARYA

The Historical Context

Although the term 'Look East' has entered the lexicon of Indian foreign policy to describe India's policy towards East and South-East Asia since the early 1990s, its genesis goes back to the immediate aftermath of India's independence. South-East Asia, which was at least initially the core of India's 'Look East' policy, became a distinctive term only during the Second World War, not the least because of the formation of the Allied South East Asia Command (SEAC) during the Second World War to fight Japanese aggression. The SEAC was headquartered in Candy (in then Ceylon, now Sri Lanka). At this time, and until the Asia-Africa Conference in Bandung in 1955, India was considered to be part of South-East Asia, rather than 'South Asia' as currently understood. Indeed, the five sponsors of the Bandung Conference were officially called 'The Conference of South East Asian Prime Ministers' and included three nations—India, Pakistan, and Ceylon—which later came to part of 'South Asia' (Acharya 2013).

In the early post-war period, Indian interests in South-East Asia comprised strategic, political, and economic dimensions. The Japanese conquest of South-East Asia and the advance of the Japanese army to the border region between Burma and British India underscored the strategic vulnerability of India to attacks through South-East Asia. The Indian diplomat and strategic thinker K. M. Panikkar, who is credited with being among the first to use the term South-East Asia, suggested the creation of an 'Indian security sphere' extending from the Persian Gulf to Burma, Siam, the Indo-Chinese Peninsula, Malay, and Singapore. Economically, South-East Asia was a major market for Indian textiles (Burma was an almost exclusive Indian market) while India was heavily dependent on Burma, Indonesia, Malay, Thailand, and Indochina for oil, rubber, tin, rice, and timber. Politically, India had shared with the political elite in South-East Asia a common interest in fostering decolonization and promoting Asian unity. Ayoob suggests four reasons for Indian interest in South-East Asia: first, the Indian nationalist leaders

viewed the anti-colonial struggles in South-East Asia as being indivisible from their own struggle. Second, India also saw South-East Asia as a region of geostrategic significance, especially from the point of view of maritime strategy. Third, the emergence of China as a major Asian power introduced an important new dimension to India's interest in South-East Asia. Last but not the least, an estimated 1.3 to 1.8 million Indian immigrants in South-East Asia provided another crucial link between India and South-East Asia. The treatment of Indian migrants in Burma did become an issue in Indian relations with that country. Strategically, Indian leaders like Deputy Prime Minister Sardar Vallabbhai Patel were concerned about the implications of instability and communist insurgency in South-East Asia.

If the pre-colonial interactions between India and South-East Asia were mediated by culture and commerce, that following the end of the Second World War was dominated by nationalism and a common quest for decolonization. India's struggle for independence from the British rule was viewed in South-East Asia with great interest. After being the second Asian country after the Philippines to achieve its independence in 1947, India played an important role in the campaign for self-determination in South-East Asia. The Indian Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, was a key champion of Indonesian independence. However, Indian support was mainly political and diplomatic. Nehru refused Ho Chi Minh's request for material support against the French, which had been specifically asked for by the DRV (Democratic Republic of Vietnam, controlled by Ho Chi Minh) delegation to the Asian Relations Conference in New Delhi in March–April 1947. Nehru took a more active role in supporting Indonesia's struggle against the Dutch, but was against providing significant material support. This would cost him some legitimacy as a champion of Asian unity.

The evolution of India's approach to East Asia from the dawn of the twentieth century to the birth of the 'Look East' policy in the early 1990s can be divided into four stages. The first stage may be termed 'romancing Asia'. As modern India began to construct its identity at the turn of the twentieth century, an emphasis on the cultural affinity with Asia became an important component of the national movement. The common struggle for independence against Western imperialism was only one of the sources of defining India's Asian identity. The rediscovery of shared civilizational history and the new awareness of ancient India's contributions to the evolution of Asia deepened India's sense of being the prime mover of the great continent. India's new Asian romanticism, however, ran into the real world of competing Asian perceptions. Rabindranath Tagore's critique of nationalism and materialism was received with hostility in Japan and China. The Indian national movement also found itself divided in dealing with the inter-imperialist rivalries between Japan and the West. Despite the Indian national movement's strong expression of solidarity with the Chinese brethren, the former was focused on fighting the British and latter on Japanese imperialism. Worse still, if India saw itself as the natural leader of Asia, many in China and Japan looked down upon colonial India as a defeated and pacifist nation. Even as they admired Indian leaders, many smaller Asian nations were also afraid of India emerging as a dominant power. These contradictions between India's self-perception of its role in Asia and the image of India in other Asian countries would prove to be enduring in the rest of the twentieth century.

The second stage in India's engagement with contemporary Asia may be termed 'leading Asia'. If Tagore articulated the vision of an Asian spiritual civilization, it was Jawaharlal Nehru who forged it into an ambitious political agenda aimed at building a new Asian century through regional solidarity and unity. Nehru also fancied the idea of an Eastern Federation shaping international politics in the post-war era. Nehru took the lead in organizing Asian cooperation by hosting two pan-Asian conferences in New Delhi. The first, the Asian Relations Conference of 1947, was an unofficial event that focused on issues such as national freedom movements, racial problems, intra-Asian migration, transition from colonial economy, labour issues, cultural problems, and the status of women and women's movements in Asia (Appadurai 1979). The Conference on Indonesia in 1949 specifically discussed and condemned the Dutch 'Police Action' in Indonesia and demanded Indonesian independence. These efforts, especially the 1947 Conference showed unity on decolonization, but revealed deep differences on contemporary economic and political issues among the Asian nations and did not succeed in creating a viable regional organization. A group formed at the 1947 Conference, called the Asian Relations Organization, was anaemic from birth and folded unceremoniously in 1955.

But India, despite its early start as an independent Asian nation and as an international actor, was resented and feared in Asia because of its diplomatic style and domineering attitude. A key aspect of Indian diplomacy during this period was its policy towards China. Nehru advocated a policy of 'engaging China' and rejected the US policy of isolating it from Asian regional groupings. He insisted on inviting China to the Bandung Conference despite opposition from the West, and without securing from Zhou Enlai an understanding that non-interference had to include cessation of Chinese support for the spread of communist ideology. Recently declassified Chinese and Western documents of the period show that Nehru to some extent misunderstood Chinese intentions and underestimated China's own ideological and strategic imperatives.

The official minutes of the Bogor (Indonesia) Conference on 29 December 1954 held to discuss the organization of the Bandung Conference, summarized Nehru's views on China as indicating that:

> The Indian Prime Minister was convinced that China is anxious to avoid war, anxious even to avoid friction and possibilities of conflict. China urgently desires peace, because she is passionately concerned about the problem of economic uplift. She would like to be left in peace and to develop relations with other countries. So no attack will come from China. She fears, however, that the neighbouring countries could be used to endanger her security. It is important for her to know what the neighbouring countries are doing. ('Discussions on the International Situation', 1954: 116–17)

Nehru certainly overstated Mao's desire for peace. He was more correct in recognizing that 'China ... was logically and practically thrown in the arms of Russia [and] that the people in China are essentially Chinese' ('Discussions on the International Situation',

1954: 116–17). Hence it would be wise to engage China through Asian forums where the Soviet Union was not present. Inviting China to the Bandung Conference was thus a logical policy which could help woo China out of the Soviet orbit and refocus on its Asian identity. The Sino-Soviet split that occurred within a decade of the Bandung meeting did to some extent bear him out. But Nehru miscalculated on how far China would go in following India's interests and leadership (Acharya 2012). As India drifted into a war with China in 1962, the idea of Asian solidarity under Indian leadership could no longer be sustained.

After Bandung India shifted attention away from Asian neutralism towards global non-alignment, considering Asia to be too small a stage for its diplomacy. This third stage in India's post-war approach to Asia may be called 'leaving Asia'. This was a strategic mistake, as it would cost India the possibility of membership of ASEAN, which was set up in 1967 as Asia's first regional organization, with five nations: Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and Philippines. ASEAN would subsequently expand its membership to bring in another five countries: Brunei (1984), Vietnam (1995), Laos (1997), Myanmar (1997), and Cambodia (1997), thereby becoming ASEAN-10. There is some misconception that India was invited to join ASEAN in 1967. This is untrue, as a closer scrutiny of archival evidence shows. It was Sri Lanka (then Ceylon) which had been invited to come to the founding vent of ASEAN on 8 August 1967, but declined, seeing ASEAN as a pro-Western club and fearing that joining it would compromise its foreign policy of non-alignment. India was simply not invited (Acharya 2013: 155; Acharya 2014: 49–50).[1]

After the Cold War and the collapse of the socialist model, India began the process of 'returning to Asia', marking the fourth stage in its evolving relationship with East Asia. It is during this stage that the 'Look East' policy was articulated (Shahin 2003). But the forces driving this return were quite different from those which underpinned India's diplomacy in East and South-East Asia in the 1940s and 1950s. In a speech at Harvard University in 2003, Yaswant Singh, who was India's External Affairs Minister during the 1998–2002 period, outlined this difference:

> In the past, India's engagement with much of Asia, including South East and East Asia, was built on an idealistic conception of Asian brotherhood, based on shared experiences of colonialism and of cultural ties. The rhythm of the region today is determined, however, as much by trade, investment and production as by history and culture. That is what motivates our decade-old 'Look East' policy. (Zhang 2006: 15)

Another difference is that the new 'Look East' policy was, at least initially, more of a one-way street, being more of a case with India courting ASEAN than the other way around. In the early post-Second World War period, many South-East Asian leaders, including Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore which was still under British colonial rule, looked to India and Nehru for inspiration. In this respect, India's engagement with ASEAN was different from the manner of China's with ASEAN. ASEAN sought to engage China because of its rising economic and military power. In the case of India,

it was India that initiated its engagement with ASEAN due to pressing domestic economic and to a lesser extent, strategic reasons. ASEAN would reciprocate India's 'Look East' policy, but slowly and warily, in contrast to its initially enthusiastic engagement of China. After being excluded from its founding, India would be invited to become one of ASEAN's dialogue partners, and be accepted as a member of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF).

The immediate factors contributing to the emergence of India's 'Look East' policy had much to do with India's domestic economic liberalization drive, which was forced upon the Rao government (1991–6) by harsh domestic economic and political realities. In 1991 India's balance of payments situation was precarious, with foreign exchange reserves at a mere 1.2 billion, sufficient only to pay for three weeks' worth of imports, and the country on the verge of default. In response, Rao initiated a series of economic reforms and articulated the 'Look East' policy in the context of these reforms, especially with a view to promote economic integration with East Asia and Pacific countries (Zhang 2006: 6). As Rao would explain in 1994, the objective of the 'Look East' policy was 'to draw, as much as possible, investment and cooperation from the Asia-Pacific countries, in consonance with our common concept and solidarity and my faith in our common destiny' (Nanda 2003: 320). But it is important to recognize that the 'Look East' policy was also supported by strategic and diplomatic developments, which changed the outlook of both India's and South-East Asian neighbours in engaging each other. These developments included the end of the Cold War, the settlement of the Cambodia conflict, the rise of China, and the emergence of new multilateral institutions in the Asia Pacific region. Because of these strategic developments, the 'Look East' policy, while it was initiated by India, came to reflect the changing attitudes and imperatives of its eastern neighbours as well. Hence, unlike many other accounts of the 'Look East' policy, I would like to underscore its two-way dynamic.

India's 'Look East' policy was, at its initial stages, not really pan-Asian, but largely focused on South-East Asia and ASEAN. This is not surprising, because not only was ASEAN India's closer to India in terms of geography (although Myanmar would become a full member of ASEAN only in 1999), but ASEAN had also gained international recognition as a respected regional grouping. The end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union removed a major political obstacle to India–ASEAN relations. India's close ties with the Soviet Union had made some of the pro-Western ASEAN countries such as Thailand and Singapore (as well as Japan and South Korea in North-East Asia) wary of embracing India. For India, the end of the Cold War also lessened the strategic rationale for the non-alignment approach that had been a cornerstone of India's foreign policy. Indeed, in the past, ASEAN had been viewed in some Indian circles as too pro-Western a bloc. The pursuit of regionalism, such as that developed by ASEAN, became more appealing to India than before. The settlement of the decade-long Cambodia conflict by the Paris Peace Agreement in 1991 also helped India's 'Look East' orientation. That conflict had been triggered by the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia in 1979 and its occupation of the country till 1989 had been a source of rift between India and ASEAN, as

India had recognized the Vietnamese installed regime in Cambodia whereas ASEAN was actively supporting the coalition resisting that regime.

Another element is the changing strategic climate in the Asia Pacific region that favoured the development of closer political and security ties between India and the South-East Asian countries. With the end of the Cold War ASEAN diluted its earlier policy of Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality (ZOPFAN), which had sought to minimize the involvement of outside powers, India included, in South-East Asian affairs. The more inclusive turn in ASEAN posture created space for India to seek greater engagement in South-East Asia. And ASEAN's instrumental role in resolving the Cambodia conflict (albeit in partnership with Western nations and Japan) gave it the diplomatic clout to pursue an agenda of expanding not only its own membership, but also the network of its dialogue partners, by inviting China, South Korea, and India, among others, to be part of it. In the context of such widening, ASEAN also launched a wider regional security forum, called the ASEAN Regional Forum, in 1994, comprising the key players affecting the security of the Asia Pacific region, including the United States, China, and Australia. While India had to wait for two years before it was accepted into the ARF, the new framework of 'cooperative security' gave it an opening to advance its 'Look East' policy beyond its initial economic focus.

Finally, the rise of China, although less pronounced in the early 1990s than a decade later, did create more common ground between India and its eastern neighbours. India itself saw the rise of China both as a security challenge but also an economic opportunity. Aside from sensing possibilities for expanding trade and other economic links with China directly, India also found ASEAN's policy towards China—a mix of diplomatic engagement through regional institutions, strategic and strategic hedging through closer ties with other greater powers such as the United States, Japan, the European Union, Australia, as well as India—to be consistent with its own interest and approach. Unlike China, India did not have any outstanding border or land disputes in South-East Asia. It had already marked out its maritime boundary with Indonesia and Thailand. Despite wariness caused by memories of India's diplomatic style (a reputation for lecturing, moralizing, and arrogance) no South-East Asian nation considered India to be a threat to its security.

India's contemporary 'Look East' policy has three main dimensions: economic, strategic, and institutional. And these are closely linked. Economic calculations are vital if India is to be a credible player in East Asian security architecture, since India's neighbours see India's potential as a strategic partner mainly due to its economic growth and potential. Although India's economic engagement with East Asia has grown rapidly since the early 1990s, India has found it hard to keep pace with the region's expectations. It has seriously lagged behind China in developing economic ties with ASEAN; for example, China's trade with ASEAN was more than four times that between India and ASEAN in 2012. Part of the reason lies in India's own political ambivalence on free trade that constrains its integration with East Asia. The focus of this chapter is on the

strategic and institutional dimensions of India's 'Look East' policy. In the following sections, I briefly outline these.

The Strategic Dimension

As noted, India's 'Look East' policy was initially driven by economic calculations mainly on the part of India. But strategic considerations have become increasingly dominant and may now be driving the relationship. Moreover, this policy now reflects imperatives from both India and its eastern neighbours, especially the ASEAN countries. India's lack of territorial disputes with ASEAN members, and, in the contest of the growth of Chinese naval power, India's growing security ties with the United States (which are a plus for ASEAN) and its naval power in western South-East Asian and Indian Ocean waters make India a 'strategic asset' to ASEAN.

Of late there has been much talk about India being a 'balancer' in Asia or East Asia. To be sure, some ASEAN members such as Singapore hope that drawing India into South-East Asia would balance China's diplomatic and strategic influence. But the idea of 'balancing' here must be a qualified one, resting more on the political, economic, and diplomatic elements than on the military. A more traditional conceptualization of 'balancing' resting on military power and alliances is problematic for several reasons. First, it is not clear whether the India would seek such a role for itself. Some Asian strategic analysts have cast India and China as 'natural rivals' for influence in South-East Asia. But Indian officials were critical of any move towards a pre-emptive containment of China, preferring instead to talk about the 'engagement' of China, which would bring China into a system of regional order. This policy might have changed with the growing assertiveness of China, but India is unlikely to fully embrace a doctrine of containment. At least Indian elite opinion is divided over a balancing role for India in East Asia, partly due to confusion over what a 'balancer' role might actually involve. India is not ready to see the formation of an Asian 'NATO'. An Asian NATO against China might go against the lingering ethos of non-alignment that exists among sections of India's foreign policy elite.

Does India as balancer mean physically challenging China by registering a credible military presence in East Asia? This is unlikely, despite the occasional forays by the Indian navy into the South China Sea and East Asian waters. Might India pursue a policy akin to what Britain did in continental Europe during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, i.e. an offshore balancer? Aside from lack of political resolve, India also may not have the resources, military and economic, that such a balancing role would require.

Balancing can also occur through increased defence cooperation with like-minded nations in South-East and East Asia. India has increased its defence contacts with the ASEAN countries. In the 1990s, the Indian navy began conducting 'friendship exercises' with some ASEAN navies, including those of Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, and Malaysia. India and Malaysia briefly cooperated in a programme (now ended) to

provide familiarization and maintenance training for Russian-supplied MiG aircraft to Malaysia air force personnel. India has stepped up its defence cooperation with ASEAN countries and others through initiatives such as intelligence-sharing, joint or coordinated naval patrolling to combat piracy and other maritime security threats, and bilateral and multilateral military exercises. Examples include the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP), and the Milan exercises that are held every alternate year since 1995. Among the 15 participants in the 2014 Milan exercise held off the Andaman and Nicobar Islands were seven ASEAN member states (Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand), plus Australia. Exercise Malabar, which begun in 1992 as an annual bilateral exercise between the Indian and the US navies has in recent years included Japan, Australia, and Singapore and conducted both in the Indian Ocean and in East Asian waters (such as the 2014 exercises held in the Sea of Japan).

India has also increased its defence diplomacy with Asia Pacific countries through its participation in the Shangri-La Dialogue (SLD), held annually in Singapore, and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM Plus), which brings together the ASEAN countries and a number of key Asia Pacific nations including the United States, China, Japan, and Australia. Modest but growing defence contacts were also established between India and the North-East Asian countries, which have since expanded, especially with Japan. India also conducted joint patrols with the US navy in the Straits of Malacca in 2002 to curb the risks of piracy and terrorist attacks, a move that was welcomed by South-East Asian countries. Indeed, joint military activities between India and the United States in South-East Asia and the Indian Ocean are surely part of the US calculus as it pursues a 'pivot' or 'rebalancing' strategy in Asia

The Indian navy has also registered a presence in the South China Sea, which has become a major flashpoint of conflict in East Asia due to competing territorial claims involving six parties: China, Taiwan, Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, and Brunei, the last four of whom are ASEAN members. Increased deployments to the South China Sea might signal an Indian intent to act as a balancer to China, but this would be fraught with risks as China would see such a move as highly provocative. While part of the reason for the increased Indian military presence in South-East Asia has to do with concern over growing Chinese military power, India is unlikely to play a dyadic balancing role vis-à-vis China in China's own backyard.

Until now, the Indian navy remained the only one in Asia with medium-sized aircraft carriers. Now China has acquired its first aircraft carrier. India also has a relatively modern submarine force and has an active programme to build principal surface combatants. China too is building up a long-range naval force. This might set the stage for a growing naval rivalry between the two powers, especially in the Indian Ocean, where Chinese naval presence is growing (Raja Mohan 2012).

But India's balancing role as part of an overall 'Look East' approach is both cautious and limited. While Indian strategic planners recognize the importance of global trade routes through South-East Asia, and share a concern with the rise of Chinese military power, there is little indication that India has any grand plans for assuming a

major security role in East Asia. Instead of balancing in its traditional sense of military measures and alliances, India is more interested in extending its involvement in the cooperative protection of regional sea lanes, such as being part of the 'Eyes in the Sky' programme for patrolling the piracy-infested Straits of Malacca.

As noted, India features in the US 'pivot' or 'rebalancing' strategy in Asia. This strategy, outlined by President Obama during his second term, seeks to redeploy US strategic assets from the Middle East and Europe towards Asia and the Pacific in order to counter growing Chinese assertiveness. But India maintains an uncertain or ambiguous stance towards the US strategy. US–India ties have improved markedly in the past decade, especially after Washington lifted economic sanctions against India imposed after its nuclear tests in 1998 and allowed the transfer of nuclear technology to India for civilian purposes. The two countries conduct regular military training and exercises and India is now a major buyer of US arms such as the C-130 Hercules and has access to advanced US fighter jets like the F-18 should it decide to acquire them. These might have been unthinkable during the Cold War. Both the United States and India are worried about the rise of China and the threat it might pose to Asian security, including India's territorial integrity. But as already noted, India is also wary of any US strategy of pre-emptively containing China, which would provoke the latter and complicate Sino-Indian relations.

Nonetheless, with the exception of China, where significant tensions over border issues and a sense of strategic competition remain, India's bilateral ties with all major Asian neighbours to the east, notably Indonesia and Japan, have registered significant improvements. In the past, right from the time of the Bandung Conference, India and Indonesia did not agree over the management of regional security matters. But in 2005, Indonesian President Susilo Yudhoyono's visited India to sign a Strategic Partnership agreement. President Yudhoyono was the chief guest of India's Republic Day celebrations in January 2011. Security cooperation, especially over maritime affairs, between the two countries has also improved. C. Raja Mohan argues India and Indonesia can develop a new relationship as each country leaves behind the North–South divide as the main basis of its foreign policy. Both are democratic nations now, and both have the potential to play a role as 'potential consensus-builders' in the world stage through their membership in the G-20 as well as in shaping East Asia's balance of power and security architecture. Adding to this is the emerging notion of an 'Indo-Pacific Region'. India's desire to raise its profile in the Pacific part of the 'Indo-Pacific' would require Indonesia's political support, and if successful, 'end the artificial separation between the two oceans and help construct a new Indo-Pacific region' (Raja Mohan 2011). But the Indo-Pacific concept, which is explicitly designed to bring India into the Asia Pacific security architecture and thereby make up for its lack of membership in APEC, has strong authorship and support from Indonesia, although one might think too much of an Indian role here might spark misgivings from Indonesia. Indian maritime doctrine's declaration that the entire Indian Ocean region, from the Persian Gulf to the Straits of Malacca, is its 'legitimate area of interest', might raise concerns in Indonesia. India's Maritime Strategy document released in 2009 listed the Sunda and Lombok Straits as falling within the Indian navy's area of strategic interest. It did note, however,

that 'cooperation with Indonesia is a prerequisite to enable the navy's operations in these waters' (Jha 2011).

It is arguable whether Nehru's embracing of communist China over what turned out to be a democratic and wealthier Japan during the 1950s was a strategic blunder, as some of Nehru's critics allege. For long, India and Japan ties suffered from Cold War polarization as well as from India's socialist economy and hostile attitude towards foreign investment at a time when Japan had emerged as a major source of investments in Asia. India–Japan ties seem poised to take a major uplift with the advent of the Modi government in New Delhi coming on the heels of the Abe government's clear move to relax the restrictions on Japanese defence posture set in it post-Second World War constitution and push for a more visible and forward Japanese military presence in East Asia and the Indian Ocean. Japan was the first overseas destination of Prime Minister Narendra Modi outside of South Asia. Warming Indo-Japanese relations reinforce similar trends in India's ties with the United States and Australia, thereby fuelling talk of an emerging alliance of democracies, although that idea may be a little far-fetched as India does not want to use ideology as the basis of its foreign policy and is careful not to antagonize China.

India and Asian Regionalism

ASEAN has been the lynchpin of India's engagement with regional institutions in Asia Pacific and East Asia. Prior to the 1990s, the Asia Pacific region had an institutional deficit. ASEAN was the only regional group of any consequence. But the region witnessed a proliferation of regional bodies beginning with the creation of APEC in 1989. India was excluded from APEC mainly because its protectionist economic policies, and on the ground that it was not a part of the Asian production networks forged by Japanese investments in the 1980s. But this changed subsequently with India's economic liberalization drive initiated by the Rao government.

In 1992, India became a Sectoral Dialogue Partner of ASEAN. Although restricted to areas concerning trade, investment, tourism, science, and technology, this represented India's first formal involvement with ASEAN activities. In 1995, India was made a full Dialogue Partner by ASEAN. This new status meant that India became eligible to participate in a wider range of sectors, including infrastructure, civil aviation, and computer software, as well as in the ASEAN Post-Ministerial Meetings (ASEAN-PMC). India was invited for the first time to summit level talks with ASEAN in Cambodia in November 2002. At the second ASEAN–India Summit in Bali in October 2003, India signed a Framework Agreement for creating an ASEAN–India free trade agreement (FTA) in a decade. India's subsequent FTA with ASEAN, although less ambitious than China's free trade deal with ASEAN, has enabled it to signal its economic influence and engagement in the region. The India–ASEAN FTA was originally limited to trade in goods. But it has since been expanded to cover trade in services and investments.

In 1996, India joined the ASEAN Regional Forum, the first multilateral security organization in Asia Pacific under ASEAN leadership. When the ARF was founded in 1994, ASEAN members were opposed to Indian membership. India, as with the rest of the South Asian countries, was considered to be outside of the geographic scope of the Asia Pacific region. A more important, if not publicly stated, factor was the concern that South Asian membership would saddle the ARF membership with the seemingly intractable India–Pakistan rivalry. But ASEAN soon changed its mind about India, inviting it into the ARF due to India's perceived importance as a counterweight to China. For India, inclusion in the ARF might be construed as a successful outcome of its 'Look East' policy. In joining the ARF, India hoped that the forum would produce a congruity of strategic interests between India and the Asia Pacific nations. According to an Indian official, India's expectations concerning the ARF are no different from those held by ASEAN, i.e. 'to ensure through some kind of dialogue mechanism [the] security, stability, and predictability' in the Asia Pacific environment (Acharya 1999: 12).

While India remained excluded from APEC, an institution that was once highly valued by Indian officials, this was offset by APEC's declining importance and India's growing links with ASEAN and sub-ASEAN groupings. In June 1997, India became the founding member of a new subregional grouping comprising Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, and Thailand Economic Cooperation (BISTEC). BISTEC, a Thai initiative whose objectives included regional cooperation in transport and infrastructure, offered the promise of becoming a bridge between India and ASEAN. In December 1997, it became BIMSTEC with the inclusion of Myanmar and in 2004 changed its name, if not the acronym, to Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation, with Nepal and Bhutan joining the grouping and its objectives expanding to include cooperation in energy, tourism, technology, and fisheries. India also engages the newer ASEAN members through the Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC) initiative, launched in 2000 with the participation of India, Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam, whose purpose is to promote tourism and cultural, educational, and transport links between India and the newer ASEAN members.

Another landmark in India's participation in regionalism came in 2005 when it attended the inaugural meeting of East Asian Summit (EAS). The exact functions of the EAS are still contested; the United States, which joined the EAS in 2010, wants to turns this into a security forum, a move opposed by China. India's inclusion into the EAS, despite not being an East Asian country, is symptomatic of the view held in South-East Asia that India is an important player in the Asian balance of power. Indeed, India got a seat at the EAS over Chinese objections, thanks to support from some ASEAN countries, especially Singapore and Indonesia. Explaining why ASEAN decided to invite India, Australia, and New Zealand to participate in the East Asian Summit, Singapore's former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew observed:

> We agreed that we should also invite India, Australia and New Zealand and keep the center in ASEAN; also, India would be a useful balance to China's heft. This is a getting-together of countries that believe their economic and cultural relations will

> grow over the years. And this will be a restoration of two ancient civilizations: China and India. With their revival, their influence will again spread into South-East Asia. It would mean great prosperity for the region, but could also mean a tussle for power. Therefore, we think it best that from the beginning, we bring all the parties in together. It's not Asians versus whites. Everybody knows Australia and New Zealand are close to the U.S. There shouldn't be any concern that this is an anti-American grouping. It's a neater balance. (Elegant and Elliot 2005)

It should be stressed that Mr Lee's use of the term 'balance' ('useful balance' and 'neater balance') was not to call for a military role for India (or Australia and New Zealand) in ASEAN or a formal strategic alliance between India and ASEAN. It was rather a diplomatic manoeuvre. This approach would only be construed as balancing if one interprets balance of power in diplomatic and political terms. In other words, the meaning of 'balance' here is institutional, rather than military. This may reflect the inherent ambiguities and multiple meanings of the term, but is hardly compatible with the conventional notion of power balancing.

For its part, in these ASEAN-led multilateral forums, India's role has been relatively low-key, instead of repeating its 1940s and 1950s behavior when it tried, often arrogantly, to lead Asia. India has now tended to be a junior and rather passive partner in contemporary Asian regional institutions. It has been a listener and constructive player, and has raised few controversies with its participation.

Conclusion

There has been much progress in India's 'Look East' policy since it was first formulated in the early 1990s. It is no longer a one-way street, as it originally seemed to be. After a slow start, India's eastern neighbours have rediscovered and engaged India. This was due to a growing recognition of India's economic potential and rising strategic potential. While economic factors initially drove India's 'Look East' policy, now it is shaped by both strategic and economic considerations. Moreover, the 'Look East' policy has extended beyond the original ASEAN-6 to include Vietnam (which joined ASEAN in 1995) and beyond to cover the North-East Asian region, especially China, Japan, and South Korea. At the same time, India's 'Look East' is now recognized and welcomed by other major powers in the region, including the United States, Australia, and Japan who have actively embraced India partly due to their concerns over rising China. The Modi government has pledged to intensify its eastern engagement; in August 2014, Indian External Affairs Minister Susma Swaraja pledged to turn India's 'Look East' to an 'Acting East' policy (Narayan 2014).

But is India the 'once and future' leader of Asia? Unlike the early post-war period, India is not in a position to lead Asian regional institutions. Moreover, while in the 1950s India championed limiting the US role in the region, and overshadowed South-East

Asian leaders and diplomats, today, India's role in Asia is being carried out in association within ASEAN's diplomatic framework and with the backing of the United States, and pro-Western players like Australia and Japan.

Moreover, there are challenges, both old and new, to India's 'Look East' policy. Asian neighbours including the major champions of India's greater engagement in the region such as Singapore are sometimes exasperated by New Delhi's lack of attention to the region. They doubt the sincerity of Indian policy-makers when they talk about the 'Look East' narrative. India as the geographic pivot of Asia has to pay equal if not more attention to its western sector if its 'Look East' policy is to be taken seriously. A second criticism has to do with misgiving stemming from a lack of resources and ability to compete with China. Another challenge has to do with India's global ambitions as an emerging power. India's membership in the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa), as well as the G-20 means it has received global recognition as a leading power of the twenty-first century. Might this then mean less time for and attention to its engagement with relatively weaker players such as ASEAN?

In the 1940s and 1950s, India had thought big about the future of Asia. But it did not have the power to overcome the effects of the Cold War and the regional competitions and tensions in Asia. Today, India has steadily growing power potential. But New Delhi appears to be still hamstrung by a vision deficit. At a time when many of the original ideas of Nehru, such as an Eastern Federation, seem realizable at least on the economic front, India seems to be still plagued by internal self-doubt and the burden of inherited ideologies. On the security front, India indeed has the potential to define the future security architecture of the region. There has been a tendency to sharply differentiate between two orientations in India's role in East Asia: a balancer role and a community-builder role. But India can make a contribution to Asian regional order by being a 'swing player' in the Asian power balance and by using its growing economic and strategic resources to promote Asian community-building. At the same time, can India override the internal tension between pursuing an 'anti-Western' orientation and the new opportunities that emerge from a deeper, alliance-like relationship with the United States and Japan, despite the significant recent improvement in its ties with both countries? This seems far from assured.

India has traditionally focused on insulating itself from the pressures of the international and regional systems than in shaping them. The big question is can India lend a new purpose to its newfound regional power? This is the key challenge facing the future of its 'Look East' policy.

Note

1. According to a British memo, dispatched from its embassy in Jakarta, 'the unexpressed reason [for Indonesia's lack of interest in India's membership in ASEAN] may be that the entry of India into the Association would constitute a challenge to Indonesia's tacitly recognized leadership of it' (Acharya 2014: 71, note 30).

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CHAPTER 34

THE INDIAN OCEAN AS INDIA'S OCEAN

DAVID SCOTT

Introduction

The topic of India in the Indian Ocean has a two-fold context at the start of the twenty-first century. Firstly, the simultaneous rise of India and China is one important paradigm shift in the international system. Secondly, a further paradigm shift is evident at the regional level for India, whereby a land focus onto South Asia has been complemented by a maritime focus onto the Indian Ocean. Jawaharlal Nehru's earlier formal rejection of geopolitics as a driving force in foreign policy relationships has been replaced by equally formal government recognition that 'the geo-strategic importance of the Indian Ocean cannot be underestimated' (Khurshid 2012). Such geostrategic sensitivities involve geopolitical and geoeconomic drivers, and such geostrategic sensitivity led both the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and following Congress Party (CP) governments, from 1998–2004 and 2004–14 respectively, to pursue related Indian Ocean policies and actions.

Official Frameworks

One changing feature in India is the lessons taken from history and envisagement of India's place in its 'region'. Previously, India looked north and seemed shaped by land-based developments from the north. However, there has been a conscious attempt in India to recover and strengthen a maritime narrative. One rediscovery has been the old Chola Empire. At its height in the early eleventh century CE, the Chola's naval power extended from the East Indian coast over the Bay of Bengal to the Straits of Malacca and surrounding South-East Asian littoral. Another rediscovery has been that of British

India. At its height, one viceroy, Nathanial Curzon, famously talked in his 1911 tract *The Role of India in the Empire* of India being an 'inexhaustible reservoir of manpower' for military and political power to be deployed across the Indian Ocean basin, littoral, and choke points.

However, in practice, India in its first half century neglected this potential (geo-)political inheritance. In a conscious echoing of Alfred Mahan's famous geopolitical 1890 tract *The Influence of Sea Power on History*, Kavalam Panikkar's own 1945 study *India and the Indian Ocean: An Essay on the Influence of Sea Power on Indian History* envisaged an independent India inheriting this British India position of leadership across the Indian Ocean. However, Panikkar's vision was largely ignored. Instead, under the governments of Nehru (1947–63) and Indira Gandhi (1966–77, 1980–4), the navy remained a low-profile, weak, and neglected Cinderella-like service. Admittedly, Nehru invoked the importance of the Indian Ocean in enabling British imperial control, pointed out India's central location in the Indian Ocean, and authorized the purchase of an ex-British aircraft carrier, which was inducted into the Indian navy as INS *Vikrant* in 1961. However, Nehru's foreign policy neglected any tangible focus on the Indian Ocean as a sphere to be secured. Instead, Nehru looked towards international global issues.

In contrast, Indira Gandhi looked towards India's region; but this was a focus on its immediate land neighbours Pakistan, Nepal, Sikkim, and Bangladesh. The Indira Doctrine focused on India taking a position of leadership in South Asia, but land power was a crucial underpinning for the doctrine. The context was partly rivalry with Pakistan, and partly a sense of Chinese threat coming from the Tibetan plateau, and on disputed Himalayan borders, already demonstrated with India's defeat in the India–China War of 1962.

The significance of Gandhi's call, in vain, during the 1970s and 1980s for the Indian Ocean to become a Zone of Peace (IOZOP) was that this represented a position of weakness by India. India, faced with Britain's 'East of Suez' withdrawal, was unable to step into Britain's shoes in the Indian Ocean. A modest role was taken up by India, naval training teams were regularly sent to Oman from 1971 onwards, low-level security agreements were drawn up with Mauritius in 1974, leading to contingency plans for intervention in Mauritius (*Operation Lal Dora*) in 1983, and the Indian navy helped avert a coup in the Seychelles (*Operation Flowers are Blooming*) in 1986. However, this was a relatively minor role for India, which perceived the Indian Ocean region as subject to dangerous Cold War superpower rivalries. There was particular Indian disquiet over the US base set up in the middle of the Indian Ocean at Diego Garcia. In short, the Indian Ocean represented a *geography of threat* for India

Admittedly, under Rajiv Gandhi's premiership (1984–9) there was a modest naval push, including a second aircraft carrier (INS *Viraat*) purchased in 1987, a nuclear submarine (INS *Chakra*) leased for three years from Russia in 1988, and intervention in the Maldives (*Operation Cactus*) in 1988. This Indian Ocean activism was short-lived and India's naval strength subsequently declined in the 1990s. Security agreements drawn up with Mauritius by Indira Gandhi also languished in the 1990s, although naval exercises were commenced with Oman in 1993. The Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional

Cooperation (IO-ARC) was indeed set up in 1995 but became quickly neglected by India and other members.

However, the situation was transformed in the first decade of the twenty-first century, as the Indian Ocean became seen as presenting a *geography of opportunity* for India. One new geographical paradigm for Indian governments was *extended neighbourhood*, a term first officially used by Inder Gujral in 1997, and pushed in the 2000s. Within an official 'omni-directional diplomacy', a Look East policy took India across the Bay of Bengal, and a Look West drive took India across the Arabian Sea. A process of neighbourhood creep was apparent in India's Look South drive, in which India's initial strategic interest in the northern Indian Ocean ('north of the Equator') was extended further down into the southern Indian Ocean. The government was explicit about this in 2007:

> The primary area of Indian maritime interest ranges from the Persian Gulf in the north, to Antarctica in the south, and from the Cape of Good Hope and the East Coast of Africa in the west, to the Straits of Malacca and the archipelagos of Malaysia and Indonesia in the east. (Mukherjee 2007)

Such maritime interests generated Indian Ocean naval operations. In such a vein, the then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh (2004) asserted that 'our strategic footprint covers ... to the far reaches of the Indian Ocean. Awareness of this reality should inform and animate our strategic thinking and defense planning' (Singh 2004). It also generated leadership claims that 'the Indian Navy must be the most important maritime power in this [Indian Ocean] region' (Singh 2009).

A second geopolitically-informed change was naval formulations, in particular the *Indian Maritime Doctrine* published in 2004 (further updated in 2009), and *India's Maritime Military Strategy* published in 2007. They reflected a shift of maritime vision from a small coastal-hugging passive brown-water fleet to a larger ocean-going active blue-water fleet capable of power projection throughout the Indian Ocean. Significantly, the Indian Ocean was pinpointed as an area of *primary* strategic interest for India, with varied 'combat', 'constabulary', and 'diplomatic' roles envisaged for the Indian navy. Choke point security, in and out of the Indian Ocean, was officially highlighted. Evocation of geopolitical theorists like Mahan and Corbett was also noticeable in these naval publications, with specific talk of geopolitics and geoeconomics as shaping maritime strategy in the Indian Ocean.

India has been active in setting up Indian Ocean maritime frameworks. At the service level, multilateral *Milan* naval exercises in the Bay of Bengal have been organized by India since 1995. By 2012 and 2014, these exercises involved a wide swathe of Indian Ocean actors in the shape of Mauritius, Seychelles, Maldives, India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, and Australia; as well as some still further east like Brunei, Vietnam, and the Philippines. *Milan* essentially became a political statement and networking exercise, showing India's ability to take an active and leading role towards other Indo-Pacific states, unencumbered by the presence of larger outside powers like the United States or China.

At the government level, India took a leading role in setting up the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) in 2008. This was a forum in which India immediately exerted a degree of unofficial pre-eminence. One sign of this was that India successfully blocked China's attempt to join the organization in 2009.

Geopolitics and Geoeconomics

Traditional geopolitics looks at 'position' in terms of locations and shape. Official statements since the 2000s routinely emphasize India's location as generating advantages and opportunities in the Indian Ocean. This was well expressed by the then Foreign Secretary Nirupama Rao (2010) that 'India and the Indian Ocean are inseparable. In the midst of the third largest ocean in the world, India's location is in many ways her destiny.' India's naval leadership talked of 'leveraging our strategic geography ... by virtue of India's geo-strategic location in the Indian Ocean' (Joshi 2013a). In turn, *critical geopolitics* looks at 'position' in terms of aspirations, hopes, and fears on the part of India. Here, South Asia presented a land arena for hopes of pre-eminence, with the Indian subcontinent considered in effect as *India's subcontinent*, but this exertion of geographic advantage was hampered by the Pakistan–China partnership. In comparison, the Indian Ocean could present a maritime arena for Indian hopes of pre-eminence, considered in effect as *India's Ocean*.

Geopolitics is entwined with geoeconomics and its focus on matters of control and access to economic resources. This is a rising twenty-first century issue. It was no coincidence that the Manmohan Doctrine enunciated in 2005 emphasized the particular importance of economics in shaping India's international rise and in shaping India's foreign policy relationships. Trade flows for India increased under globalization (which India embraced in the 1990s), but such burgeoning trade was not across traditional land frontiers with Pakistan and China. Instead, India's exports and imports remained mostly across the shipping lanes of the Indian Ocean. Consequently, secure Sea Lanes of Communication (SLOCs) have been a key security issue for India in the twenty-first century. In turn, such economic flows into and out of the Indian Ocean give the various Indian Ocean choke points from the Gulf (Strait of Hormuz), Middle East (Bab-el-Mandeb), and Far East (Strait of Malacca) a growing strategic significance for India.

Within this economics-driven rise, unprecedented *energy security* imperatives arose for India, generated by its own industrialization, which meant ever-greater energy and scarce mineral needs. Over 80 per cent of India's oil was imported in 2012. With the lack of overland pipelines, these imports overwhelmingly arrived in India from across the Indian Ocean, primarily eastwards from across the Gulf and Middle East, and secondarily westwards from the South China Sea and Russian Far East. Similar Indian Ocean dependency was seen with gas imports. In addition, the Central Indian Ocean Basin became the scene for deep sea exploration and licences for scarce mineral resources.

India's own nodule extraction began in 1981, with an area in the Central Indian Ocean Basin of around 58,000 square miles allocated under United Nations Law of the Seas (UNLOS) regulation in 1987. Thereafter, India's own deep-sea mining push languished, but reawoke with news in 2011 of China being awarded exploration rights to a 3,900 square mile stretch in the southwest Indian Ocean Basin. The acquisition by the Geological Survey of India (GSI) of its own long-term advanced level deep-sea mining ship the *Samudra Ratnakar*, which commenced explorations in January 2014, may have been geologically-badged in name, but it was geoeconomically-related in impact and rationale.

Location and Oceanic Holdings

Location is a geographic constant, whereas the implications of location are a matter of calculation, strategy, policy, and actions. It was with these derived matters of calculation, strategy, policy, and actions that important shifts took place whereby India attempted to take advantage of its location and oceanic holdings in a geopolitical and geoeconomic fashion.

India's basic starting point is that it is centrally located between the eastern and western stretches of the Indian Ocean, thereby able to deploy maritime seapower in both directions more easily than other littoral states found in one half or the other of the Indian Ocean. India also juts southwards deep into the Indian Ocean, with a long coastline of just over 4,670 miles. This is an immediate asset for Indian Ocean operations, and magnifies India power projection much further than is the case for other states huddling along the northern littoral of the Indian Ocean. These locational features of geography generate geopolitical advantages. The Indian government thus argued in 2012 that 'India's strategic location in the Indian Ocean ... bestows upon us a natural ability to play a leading role in ensuring peace and stability in the Indian Ocean Region' (PIB 2012).

India's advantage through holding the Lakshadweep islands along its western flank, where a new naval station (INS Dweeprakshak) was announced in 2012, is echoed in a bigger fashion by the significant advantages gained on its eastern flank by possession of the Andaman and Nicobar island chains. Effective use of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, in conjunction with India's own long eastern coastline, hold out the prospect of the Bay of Bengal becoming something of an Indian backyard, as it had been in British India times.

Although the Andaman and Nicobar Islands languished as a backwater during the initial decades of independent India, their significance has been recognized in the last decade. The visit by President Mukherjee at the start of 2014 reflected the significant geopolitical and geoeconomic drivers shaping India's role in the Indian Ocean.

> The location of a dedicated tri-Service command highlights the strategic position of these islands from the view point of the defense of India. Further, around 30 per cent

> of India's Exclusive Economic Zone and concomitant marine resources are around these islands. These islands are not only the maritime gateway to the Bay of Bengal but also overlook major international sea routes. These islands have the potential to be a spring board for India's engagement with South East Asia and the Pacific region. They can be developed as a significant trading, shipping and tourist hub. (Mukherjee 2014)

The government also recognized the military significance of these islands. The then Chief of Naval Staff Nirmal Verma (2012) was clear that 'the geographic disposition of the archipelago ... offers a vital geo-strategic advantage to India', for 'they provide the nation with a commanding presence in the Bay of Bengal'. The Andaman and Nicobar Islands also point further eastwards. The Defence Ministry's *Annual Report 2011–2012* accurately noted that the islands 'assume strategic predominance with respect to the entrance to the Malacca Straits' (MoD 2012), a crucial emerging choke point concern for India. Unofficial government thinking was indicated by its adviser Shyam Saran's address to the National Maritime Foundation that 'our control over these islands, strategically placed as they are, help us manage China's rise and protect our turf as it were' (Saran 2009).

More importantly, such rhetoric has been acted upon, and the islands thereby transformed in recent years. Originally the islands were the site of a relatively small naval station. Then, in 2001 the station was consolidated as a tri-service Andaman and Nicobar Command reporting directly to the Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee. A further swathe of decisions were announced a decade later, with the islands envisaged as a major amphibious warfare hub, housing integrated sea-and-land fighting units for operations in the Indian Ocean and its littoral. Indian plans for further expansion and strengthening were announced in June 2011 for both the navy (Diglipur, Kamorta, Port Blair, Car Nicobar) and airforce (Shibpur and Car Nicobar) infrastructure based in the islands. At Campbell Bay, on the southerly end of the archipelago, INS Baaz was opened for naval air arm operations in August 2012, with immediate plans for a 10,000-foot runway that would allow long-range fighter operations. The navy formally took over future charge of the Andaman and Nicobar Command in November 2013.

Blue-Water Naval Projective Capabilities

A significant shift has become apparent with regard to India's blue-water naval capabilities for the Indian Ocean. The political context was a clear shift in spending allocations. If we look at the navy's share of the defence spending budget, a low point of 3.4 per cent in 1963–4 crept up to 11.2 per cent in 1992–3. The 1999–2000 budget pushed this up to a 14.5 per cent share, and a decade later it had reached a 19 per cent share. Such figures represented a much bigger share of a bigger budget.

These increased allocations enabled a significant accelerating pace of acquisitions after 2000; with more and newer surface (ships) and above surface (air) naval units coming into service, albeit often subject to delays and overspendings. This explains government assertions that 'keeping up with India's growing clout ... [the] Navy stamps blue water presence across IOR [Indian Ocean region]' (PIB 2010); and that the 'Indian Navy's Pan "IOR" operations demonstrate the reach of India's maritime diplomacy' (PIB 2012). The main headquarter bases of the Western, Southern and Eastern Commands have been enlarged; while *Operation Seabird* developed India's naval base at Karwar, INS Kadamba, into the largest such facility in the Indian Ocean. With 136 ships in 2014, the Indian navy planned to increase to a 200-ship fleet over the next ten years. A critical mass in terms of number and composition was finally achieved on and above water by the second decade of the twenty-first century.

On water, probably the biggest Indian Ocean development was a push to develop three aircraft carrier groups, one for each Command, and set to operate in western, southern, and eastern quadrants of the Indian Ocean. Within this planning, the aircraft carrier INS *Viraat* was upgraded and extended till 2020. It was joined by INS *Vikramadatiya* (the ex-Soviet *Gorshkov*) which was finally inducted into the Indian navy in November 2013. India's own Indigenous Aircraft Carrier (IAC) programme was initiated with some success; as INS *Vikrant* was floated out in August 2013, with sea trials envisaged in 2017 ready for it to join the fleet in 2018. A second IAC, INS *Vishal* was envisaged being built to replace INS *Viraat* by the early 2020s. Around the aircraft carriers' formations were various units coming into greater numbers, such as the indigenous construction of various Shivalik-class stealth frigates. Other new Indian Ocean assets, modern Kolkata-class (*Project 15A*) guided missile destroyers, worked their way into India's naval repository. Acquisition of Deepak-class tankers, with a range of 12,000 miles, provided practical support for operations deep into the Indian Ocean. Long-range and substantive amphibious operational capacity were established with the purchase in 2007 of USS *Trenton*, renamed INS *Jalashwa*; to be joined by four more Landing Platform Docks by the early 2020s.

Above water, there were various significant Indian Ocean-related acquisitions. Longer distance MiG-29K fighters were brought for the navy. Four Poseidon P-81 advanced long-range anti-submarine surveillance aircraft, able to range across the entire Indian Ocean, entered service during 2013–20 with another dozen ordered for induction by 2017. Also of significance was the upgrading of Thanjavur airbase in Tamil Nadu in May 2013, which included the deployment of advanced Sukhoi-30 Indian fighter aircraft ready for operations deep down into the Indian Ocean. Finally, the launch in August 2013 of India's own first indigenous defense satellite *Rukhmini* was considered by the Indian navy as 'a force multiplier. It covers our entire footprint of area of interest in the Indian Ocean ... It brings an entirely new dimension in network operations and in maritime operations' (Joshi 2013b).

Under water there remained problems of numbers and age with India's underwater naval assets. They were dogged by eleven accidents during 2013–14, which eventually led to the resignation of Chief of Naval Staff Devendra Joshi in February 2014. On the

one hand, the nuclear-powered stealth attack submarine INS *Chakra* was loaned for ten years from Russia in 2012, with discussions starting at the end of 2013 for a second similar type of lease. India's own indigenously-produced nuclear powered Advanced Technology Vessel (ATV), the ballistic missile submarine INS *Arihant,* went out for its sea trials in spring 2014, ready for induction later in 2014. The second such ATV submarine, INS *Aridhaman*, was similarly expected be launched during 2014. On the other hand, the paucity of India's old conventional diesel submarine numbers, fourteen in total of which only around seven to eight were deployable, was dramatically highlighted by the explosion on INS *Sindhurakshak* in August 2013. India initiated a programme for building six advanced Scorpene conventional submarines, one a year to be inducted from 2016 onwards, having suffered from delays and escalating costs. As of 2014, this left Pakistan (with newer models) and China (with greater numbers) with some underwater sea-denial capabilities in the Indian Ocean.

Diplomatic Position in the Indian Ocean

India's challenge has been to match its undoubted military hard power presence with diplomatic soft power persuasion with regard to the micro-island states in the Indian Ocean basin and key littoral states around the Indian Ocean Rim.

The general regional framework is the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), initially set up in 1995 as the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC). This was set up to foster economic cooperation, but initially languished. India's role was supportive, but not one of overt leadership, though Pakistan's refusal to grant India Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status kept Pakistan out. China's presence as an official observer created some Indian unease; perhaps counterbalanced by India's chairmanship of the grouping from 2011–13 which bought in the United States as a potential balancing observer. However, the organization has remained weak, in terms of innate strength, economic impact, and importance for India. India's sense was delicately put: 'immense untapped potential remains' in which the organization 'must be strengthened to enable it to rise to our expectations' about becoming 'an apex organization for the Indian Ocean region' (Khurshid 2012). India's talk of rejuvenating the IORA has been developed in line with the India–Australia–Indonesia steering troika announced in 2012. This was underpinned by the Track II Dialogue on Indian Ocean (TDIO) mechanism initiated in September 2013 between India, Indonesia, and Australia.

With regard to the island states, the government claimed in 2011 that it was 'mandated to be a net security provider to island nations in the Indian Ocean Region' (PIB 2011). These island states were seen by India as vulnerable to piracy incursions, Islamist jihadist destabilization, and unwelcome (in Indian eyes) Chinese attention. Ironically, anti-piracy operations initiated in 2008 gave India a degree of legitimacy, its navy able

to operate deep into the Indian Ocean with the consent of smaller threatened states. The Indian navy became a tool for humanitarian assistance, for example its 'tsunami diplomacy' in 2004 with *Operation Castor* (to the Maldives), *Operation Rainbow* (to Sri Lanka), and *Operation Gambhir* (to Indonesia).

Piracy concerns led to a defence agreement in 2009 whereby India set up radar stations on various Maldivian atolls, and took over patrol of the Maldives' Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). Such bilateral cooperation was supplemented by the IO-3, the Trilateral Maritime Security Cooperation (TMSC) mechanism set up at National Security Adviser level in July 2013 between India, the Maldives, and Sri Lanka, complete with naval exercises. Piracy concerns have also led to agreement for India to patrol the Seychelles' EEZ. India's relations are the most significant with Mauritius, partly because Mauritius has a majority Indian-descended population. A formal strategic partnership is in operation, with further economic, diplomatic, and security-defence cooperation including provision of military supplies by India and its patrolling of Mauritius' EEZ. Negotiations remain under way for a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA), though they are not yet concluded. In March 2014 the Seychelles and Mauritius joined the Indian-led TMSC, alongside India, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives, in effect making it the IO-5.

With regard to the eastern littoral of the Indian Ocean, India's previous relationship with Myanmar was clouded during the 1990s and 2000s by Myanmar's close links with China, and consequent Indian fears of Chinese maritime presence. However, India's economic, energy, and military links improved after 2011, with Indian fears of a Chinese presence on Little Coco Island receding. A straightforward relationship with Thailand was set up. This included joint *Indo-Thai Corpat* naval exercises since 2005, a defence dialogue initiated in 2011, and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Defence Cooperation signed in 2012. Further around the littoral, a strategic partnership agreement was signed with Malaysia in 2010, though more operating in terms of India providing some modest army and air force training, rather than substantive naval cooperation. In contrast, Singapore, at the junction point between the Strait of Malacca and the South China Sea, became a close and explicit security partner of India. Joint naval *Simbex* exercises in the Bay of Bengal commenced with Singapore in 1994. The Defence Cooperation Agreement of 2003 and the Joint Military Exercises Agreement of 2007 further strengthened such India-Singapore cooperation. Indonesia, a regional giant, has significant frontage onto the Indian Ocean with an important position on the Strait of Malacca and astride the Lombok Strait choke points. Strategic convergence with India over maritime security took place in the 2000s, with joint naval patrols (*Ind-Indo Corpat*) operating since 2000, and an annual defence dialogue mechanism set up in 2011.

India's interaction with the eastern littoral is part of its growing engagement with the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), with whom India has been a Dialogue Partner since 1996. The implementation of an India–ASEAN Free Trade Agreement (FTA) in 2010 increased economic connections across the eastern Indian

Ocean between India and South-East Asia. India and ASEAN also had similar interests in maritime security in general and the Strait of Malacca in particular.

Previously cool but correct links with Australia were replaced by growing economic links, particularly uranium supplies funnelled through Western Australia. A significant defence-security agreement was drawn up in 2006, and a 'strategic partnership' proclaimed in 2009. This security convergence reflected explicit official common concerns in the Indian Ocean over sea lane security, as well as some implicit unofficial concerns over China's growing presence. Defence Minister A. K. Antony's trip to Australia in June 2013, the first such defence one from India, brought agreement on future joint naval exercises.

With regard to the western littoral of the Indian Ocean, India's defence ties with South Africa, at the Cape of Good Hope entrance point, developed in the 2000s in ways that Nehru and Indira Gandhi never envisaged. Bilateral air force and naval exercises brought Indian forces across the Indian Ocean. These were widened into IBSA (India, Brazil, and South Africa) trilateral exercises in South African waters in 2009, 2011, and 2013. Further north, India established close relations with Mozambique. Indian naval vessels were deployed off Maputo to provide protection for the African Union Summit of 2003 and the World Economic Forum in 2004. Such extension was formalized in March 2006 with an, MoU under which India agreed to mount ongoing maritime patrols off the Mozambique coast. A formal Security Cooperation Agreement was signed in July 2012. On the other side of the Mozambique channel, India set up a radar surveillance monitoring station in northern Madagascar in 2006, the first of its kind outside India. Along the eastern littoral, Tanzania and Kenya provided more friendly faces and friendly ports for India's naval diplomacy. Indian readiness to deploy into the Gulf of Aden in 2008 was facilitated by good relations with the ex-French colony of Djibouti, which lay on the Bab el-Mandeb choke point entrance between the Indian Ocean and Red Sea.

With regard to the northern littoral of the Indian Ocean, across the Bab el-Mandeb choke point India developed cordial relations with Yemen. A particularly strong relationship was shaped with Oman. An MoU for the establishment of an Oman–India Strategic Consultation Group was signed in 2002, followed by an MoU on Defence Cooperation in 2005, and the proclamation of a 'strategic partnership' in 2008. By the second decade, defence cooperation included joint air (*Eastern Bridge*) and naval (*Sea Breeze*) exercises, while an Indian listening post at Ras al-Hadd enabled close attention to the Strait of Hormuz choke point between the Gulf and the Arabian Sea. India's Arabian Sea presence was further strengthened by close links between India and Iran, flagged by the Tehran Declaration of 2001 and the New Delhi Declaration of 2003. Iran had an important energy role for India, including potential energy pipeline projects across the Arabian Sea. Iran also provided India with a pressure point on Pakistan. India's presence at the nearby Iranian port of Chabahar is some counterpoise to China's growing presence at Pakistan's deep-water port Gwadar, although increased concerns were raised in India in 2013 over the operational rights at Gwadar being transferred to China's state-run

China Overseas Port Holding Company (COPHC). Pakistan remained the littoral state most antagonistic towards India, and most closely linked to China.

Relations with Extra-Regional Powers

Two particular extra-regional powers affected India's position within the India Ocean, the United States and China. For India, this resulted in explicit growing cooperation with the United States and implicit growing competition with China.

India and the United States had convergent concerns in the Indian Ocean on piracy, jihadist operations, and China's growing naval presence. Indian 1980s distrust of the US presence at Diego Garcia gave way to deepening bilateral naval cooperation in the Indian Ocean. The *Malabar* exercises, running since the mid-1990s in the Indian Ocean, were particularly significant given the substantial forces sent by both India and the United States, and given the inter-operatability, anti-submarine, and war gaming nature of the exercises. Coordination of naval deployments generated *Operation Sagittarius*, where the Indian navy took over from the US navy the job in 2002 of escorting US shipping through the Strait of Malacca. Amid this deepening cooperation there were pledges by the US military in 2012 'to support her [India's] leadership role in the Indian Ocean' (Lockyear 2012).

The biggest extra-regional challenge to India in the Indian Ocean became China. The arrival of China in the Indian Ocean in the 2000s presented a new challenge to India, and fed into Indian worries over growing encirclement by China on land and sea. In 2009, the then Chief of Naval Staff pointed out the importance of 'countering the growing Chinese footprint in the Indian Ocean Region' (Mehta 2009). His successor similarly argued that 'China is establishing footholds all over the IOR [Indian Ocean region] ... this is not something that we can stop but our strategy certainly needs to factor in these developments' (Verma 2010). India's strategy on dealing with China was three-fold within the Indian Ocean. Firstly, building up its own military strength. Secondly, reinforcing its economic and military links with Indian Ocean states—over which aid competition with China has been a noticeable emerging feature. Thirdly, seeking cooperation in the Indian Ocean with extra-regional states also concerned about China.

The Future

In terms of India's future position in the Indian Ocean, since 2000 India's local expansion of strength has been underpinned by significant spending increases and re-allocation of resources. This is a somewhat fragile position though, since naval spending, which reached an all-time high peak in the 2012–13 defence budget, could stagnate or go down over the next decade; in which case a gap between Indian aspirations and capabilities in

the Indian Ocean would emerge. Domestic politics provided uncertainly with the new BJP administration headed by Mahendra Modi that took office in May 2014. It remained to be seen if it would increase, maintain, or decrease overall future defence spending; and if it would increase, maintain, or decrease the naval share of such future defence budgets.

The future of the Indian Ocean in Indian strategic thinking also depends on how far the term 'Indo-Pacific' operates as an organizing framework for policy, deployments, and partnerships. The term envisages the eastern Indian Ocean and the Western Pacific as one strategic framework, bridging India's Look South and Look East foreign policy horizons, and became prominent in India during the second Singh administration (2009–14). As regards India in the Indian Ocean, the likely consequences of a continuing Indo-Pacific focus will be an increased role for the Eastern Naval Command, and an even more increased role for the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. It will in all likelihood increase India's maritime cooperation in the eastern Indian Ocean with Indonesia and Australia. Already US adoption of Indo-Pacific rhetoric has been matched by further cooperation with India in the Indian Ocean as well as the Pacific. For India, a growing India–Japan security partnership is bringing a modest supportive Japanese maritime presence in the Indian Ocean. On the one hand, it is no coincidence that Raja Mohan's widely-reviewed book in late 2012, *Samudra Manthan,* had the subtitle *Sino-Indian Rivalry in the Indo-Pacific.* On the other hand, Indo-Pacific visions may give further strength to China's cooperative notion pushed in late 2013 of a maritime Silk Road coming into and across the Indian Ocean.

We can conclude with some final thoughts. If we look ahead into the next decades, with a three-aircraft carrier fleet, India will almost certainly maintain and extend its regional superiority in the Indian Ocean when compared with other local actors. Significant US power will also probably remain evident, but supportive of India's position. Notwithstanding Gulf of Aden anti-piracy cooperation between the United States, India, and China, the United States and India will otherwise tend to tighten their general naval cooperation in the Indian Ocean, as part of an ongoing soft balancing strategy within their overall hedging towards China. Meanwhile, China's countervailing role vis-à-vis India is likely to grow, reflecting a greater diplomatic, economic, and military presence. However, India will continue to have the advantage of easier local concentration and deployment of forces in the Indian Ocean against more extended and more vulnerable Chinese lines of communication across the Indian Ocean. Variations within the Indian Ocean are likely. Westwards, continuing Chinese links with Pakistan via Gwadar might reduce India's relative position in the Arabian Sea, but eastwards India's own position in the Bay of Bengal and eastern Indian Ocean can be further strengthened from its Andaman and Nicobar holdings. The southwest Indian Ocean quadrant is likely to remain a longer-range extension of Indian influence pushing down into the southern Indian Ocean and indeed geoeconomically towards Antarctica. Thus, India will in all likelihood enjoy a degree of geopolitical pre-eminence, even if it is not untrammelled, thanks to what has been called by some *the logic of geography.*

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PART V

KEY PARTNERSHIPS

CHAPTER 35

US–INDIA RELATIONS

The Struggle for an Enduring Partnership

ASHLEY J. TELLIS

DESPITE their shared affinities of constitutional democracy, liberal politics, and civic nationalism, the United States and India have not enjoyed consistently warm relations since the two countries established formal diplomatic ties. India's birth as a new republic in 1947, after several centuries of colonial domination culminating in the British Raj, roughly coincided with the consolidation of the United States as a global hegemonic power after the Second World War. This conjunction should have proved propitious for the development of strong bilateral ties because although the United States and Great Britain were steadfast allies in the struggle against Axis tyranny, Washington seemed willing to incur London's resentment by championing Indian independence—a dynamic that played out in President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Prime Minister Winston Churchill's strong personal commitments to their respective causes.

Consistent with the US position that 'the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live' applied to all nations, including the subject countries of the British Empire, Roosevelt reached out to the Indian nationalist movement in an effort to convey American support for Indian independence. Though these initiatives were kept consciously low-key in an effort to avoid giving excessive offense to a beleaguered Britain, they nonetheless had the effect of forcing Churchill to attempt accommodating Indian claims, even though London's actions during the Second World War were intended more to parry Washington's advocacy on behalf of India than to advance the cause of Indian freedom. In any event, the toll exacted by the war on British power, the defeat of Churchill's National Government in the 1945 election, and the growing strength of Indian political mobilization all made Indian independence inevitable, despite its being finally consummated in the tragic circumstances of Partition, which produced two new nations, India and Pakistan. Although India's nationalist leadership was chagrined by the US unwillingness to push Great

Britain more vigorously on Indian independence during the war, they were hopeful that the realization of *swaraj* (self-rule) in India would dovetail with the American wartime opposition to colonialism to create a productive relationship between the two democratic states.

The Struggle for Partnership: Structural Constraints amidst Cold War Competition

These expectations, however, would be repeatedly belied in the decades that followed less because of direct antagonisms and more because of contrasts in worldview, differences in national priorities, and asymmetries in power capability, which lasted in their strongest form until the end of the Cold War. As a result, the promise of an advantageous partnership, although frequently desired by leaders on both sides, was not realized. At the end of the day, this outcome ensued because neither country proved critical to the vital interests of the other, even though the considerable disparities in relative power between the United States and India implied that New Delhi would always depend more on Washington than was the case in reverse.

The many factors that contributed to the unrealized hopes of strong US–Indian ties materialized soon after the two countries were able to establish formal diplomatic ties. With the United States assuming its post-war role as a new superpower and as the global protagonist of capitalism, the primacy of material power and the presence of economic and geopolitical inequality would almost by definition become hallmarks of the American regime that replaced the British Empire as the standard-bearer of Western order.

India entered this environment as an independent entity 'wronged by empire' (Miller 2013). Although it recognized the distinctiveness of the United States in contrast to Great Britain, its previous imperial overlord, there was no disguising the fact that the structural realities of international politics had placed Washington and New Delhi in antinomic positions in the evolving order. Unlike the United States, which was a global hegemon, India was a weak polity that had survived over the millennia thanks more to its cultural unity than its material capabilities. It was also abjectly poor at the time of its independence, which made comprehensive development its principal concern. But it had a glorious history stemming from an ancient civilization—and it had vast potential power. These characteristics made it a 'great country'. If it was to become a 'great power', however, as the modernist factions of its post-independence leadership desired, it would require a peaceful domestic and international environment.

Contrasts in Worldview

The nationalist yearning for political greatness without entrapment in the US–Soviet contest during the Cold War thus became the key driver of India's national strategy. Democratic politics at home would help in unifying the nation and building a modern state, while the quest for pacific relations abroad was intended to aid India in overcoming its material weakness and according it recognition as a significant international power. The Indian consciousness of both the enormity of its developmental tasks and its uniqueness as a civilizational-state that had much to teach the world about the Kantian ideal of 'respect for persons'—but from an Eastern tradition—would then take its leaders in the direction of pursuing independent strategic policies.

Although the policy of 'non-alignment' as articulated and implemented by Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister, constituted a specific response to the particular cleavages of post-war bipolar rivalry, New Delhi's desire to avoid involvement in this competition would have taken it in different directions from that pursued then by the United States even if a different doctrinal formulation were to have found favor. What Nehru then wanted for India, and what most of his successors have wanted since, are the material benefits that otherwise come only from an alliance relationship with stronger powers, yet without any of the constraining obligations that go with such formal collaboration.

India's freedom to choose its policies on the fundamental questions pertaining to its national interest, 'when the choices come to it' (Nehru 1987: 596) had to be protected at all costs. So long as this desideratum was shielded, India could have wide-ranging ties with all the major states in the international system. In fact, Nehru believed that non-alignment in this sense did not preclude India from having preferential partnerships with some states: emphasizing that 'it does not mean that we should not be closer in our relations with some countries than with others . . in order to gain something worthwhile' (Appadorai 1972: 14, 11). He held that the only constraint in these instances should be 'that these arrangements have not been allowed to influence our major policy' (Nehru and Parthasarathi 1988: 433) or, in other words, to compromise India's larger freedom of action.

Consistent with this 'operational code', Nehru and his successors made periodic overtures to the United States seeking some sort of special relationship even as they pursued working, if not close, relationships with other powers, including Washington's principal adversaries during the Cold War, Russia and China. For both Nehru and India's subsequent leaders, outreach to the United States was intended to secure material benefits such as food aid and high technology, cementing a partnership profitable to India but not leading to—their democratic similarities notwithstanding—any formal alliance.

This associational model made sense from an Indian point of view, given New Delhi's desire to escape 'dependence' in the aftermath of its colonial experience and its hope that India's inherent importance would combine with an American commitment to aiding it for the sake of global democracy. But it was unlikely to consistently persuade the United

States, especially when the Manichean struggles of the Cold War were at their most intense. Because Washington's inclination in these circumstances was to double down on containment through a further tightening of the alliance system it had engendered during the early Cold War, the United States was not able to accommodate New Delhi's desire for a new world order that accommodated a respect for indigenous nationalism, the primacy of economic development, and the incarnation of non-violence internationally.

Neither could it entertain the Indian quest for what was in actuality an asymmetric association that would disproportionately favor India by providing it with various desired material resources in exchange for New Delhi's freedom to pursue its own course, to include frequent criticism of the United States on varied issues in international politics. New Delhi's conception of partnership thus had few takers—except on rare occasions when truly strategic and magnanimous leaders such as John F. Kennedy and George W. Bush were at the helm.

Differences in National Priorities

The contrasts in worldview were quickly reflected in the differences in national priorities. The United States' global struggle to defend its security and the safety of its allies, not to mention its hegemonic position, against a virulent Soviet upstart warranted a complete mobilization of national power and a willingness to run all the risks associated with a hot war, even in its nuclear variant, if necessary. Economic capabilities, in this situation, while obviously important in their own right for increasing wealth and welfare domestically, also had other important instrumental benefits: they were critical insofar as they contributed toward generating military power and resuscitating allies and neutrals as part of the larger strategy of resisting the Soviet Union. Because protecting American primacy became the core objective in the face of the Soviet threat—in order to assure US security, the defense of its allies, and the triumph of the American regime internationally—nurturing the most effective coalition of materially capable states turned out to be the first order of business that occupied Washington for most of the post-war era.

Hence, it was not surprising that India's leadership quickly came to view the United States not as a champion of the post-colonial states (as it had been during the war), but rather as the '"heir" to British imperialism' (Jain 1987: 10–11). The perception gained ground most deeply during the Eisenhower administration when secretary of state John Foster Dulles set about building America's Cold War alliances during the early phase of containing the Soviet Union.

The incompatibility of Washington's containment strategy with India's priorities could not have been clearer. New Delhi saw itself fundamentally as presiding over an impoverished country, confronted by the difficult tasks of building a state, a nation, and a democratic polity simultaneously—and in highly adverse circumstances. Hence India was desperate for an international environment that would permit it to concentrate

wholly on economic, political, and social development, while receiving assistance from all the major states who, being at peace with each other and having as their objective the economic resuscitation of the Third World, would be able to aid New Delhi in reaching its developmental goals. Both Nehru and Indira Gandhi would emphasize these themes in almost identical terms.

The Cold War undermined this Indian aim in important ways: it divided the international order intensely, thus preventing the kind of great-power cooperation that might have benefited India; it led to an unproductive diversion of resources from economic cooperation into military competition, thus reducing the levels of assistance India might have otherwise incurred; and it engendered competitive alliance formation that spanning the globe reached India's doorsteps when Pakistan was admitted into various US-led anti-Soviet alliances, thus imposing heightened defense burdens on New Delhi at a time when it could not afford them.

The United States' support for Pakistan and its rapprochement with China, despite both countries' rivalries with India, became the most acute exemplification of this problem, and it would in time turn out to be an important reason why US–Indian ties would never reach the epitome of friendship throughout the Cold War. Even when the US response to Pakistani aggression was simple neutrality and although Sino-Indian relations regained relative equilibrium after the 1962 war, the American relationships with Pakistan and China remain good examples of how the mutual US–Indian quest for a productive partnership during the Cold War was repeatedly frustrated by externalities.

India's response to the reality that American priorities were different from its own did not help its own cause. India eschewed any attempt to build its national power rapidly through a strategy centered on free markets domestically, where its vast millions might have been able to climb out of poverty faster in comparison to other alternatives. New Delhi balked equally at international integration externally, where India's comparative advantages would have accelerated its technological transformation and its overall growth rates. Instead, Nehru's socialism took India in the direction of stultifying state command of the economy, ensuring that neither its economic growth nor its larger state- and nation-building goals were achieved with alacrity. The reality of substandard economic performance, then, deepened Indian dependence on the United States far more than New Delhi desired, leaving it in the unviable position of detesting such reliance even as it found itself unable to escape this necessity.

India's economic weakness throughout the Cold War therefore simply made it yet another underperforming Third World state, not to be taken seriously by Washington—despite New Delhi's claims to the contrary—except when absolutely necessary. The Indian emphasis on maintaining a predominantly closed economy centered on import substitution for most of the Cold War period had one further consequence for bilateral relations: by denying American and Indian enterprises an opportunity to trade vigorously with one another, it prevented the creation of important social constituencies in both the United States and India which would have had a stake in the establishment and preservation of a strong US–Indian relationship.

Asymmetries in Power Capability

The stark asymmetries in American and Indian national capabilities completed the picture. These differences boiled down to the fact that, thanks to its vast actualized power, the United States was a producer of its own security, whereas India was largely a consumer of the security provided by others, including at different points either by the United States or the Soviet Union or the externalities ensuing from bipolarity itself. Thus, for instance, while India was content to live with benign American power until the 1960s, in fact, gravitating towards an 'unlimited military partnership' (Rusk 1962: 400) with Washington in the face of Chinese aggression in 1962, it just as purposefully swung towards the Soviet Union in 1971 when faced with the prospect of Sino-American rapprochement and an overbearing Pakistan supported by the United States.

While these transient flirtations served the purpose of protecting Indian security at those troubled moments, these solutions could not have been consoling for a nation with a proud past and great ambition. Yet India's capacity to build its national power rapidly during the Cold War was hampered by its own economic choices. And the one strategic decision that India made during this era which offered it the hope of becoming self-sufficient in regards to its own security—developing nuclear weapons—quickly took it afoul of the United States because the action materialized at exactly the time when Washington was awakening to the larger perils of proliferation. India's indecision over the years and its overconfidence in regard to its own scientific and technological capabilities, despite its glaring weaknesses in nuclear science, combined to prevent New Delhi from acquiring nuclear weapons when it might have been not only acceptable but also legitimate in terms of the global non-proliferation regime.

The Indian decision to demonstrate its nuclear prowess, however, came too late. The Pokhran-I test in 1974, the first nuclear explosion outside the bounds of the new nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), put Washington and New Delhi at odds for over 30 years thereafter. These difficulties first surfaced in acute form during the presidency of Jimmy Carter—otherwise a friend of India—and they frustrated every US administration since, including that of Ronald Reagan, which first attempted to strengthen ties with India principally to deny the Soviet Union an ally. The bilateral altercation over India's nuclear weapons program cast a shadow on every other form of cooperation, including the ones India valued most of all, such as technology transfer. Over time, it became the most conspicuous example, in Indian perceptions, of a virulent American hegemony that was determined to freeze the extant asymmetry in relative power to New Delhi's permanent disadvantage.

Unproductive Interactions

All told, the contrasts in worldview, the differences in national priorities, and the asymmetries in power capability interacted in unproductive ways throughout the Cold

War to deny both countries the opportunities to build the close relationship they otherwise desired in principle. These structural causes, respectively, gave rise to three outcomes: first, a policy of non-alignment whose ability to protect Indian interests in extremis was questionable; second, an addiction to state control as the solution to India's development aims despite the low economic growth it brought in trail; and third, a hesitant embrace of nuclear weaponry that provoked international opposition without fundamentally remedying India's weaknesses in power capability.

These consequences, however, did not imply that US–Indian relations throughout the Cold War were either uniformly antagonistic or perpetually competitive. Large areas of cooperation persisted despite the structural frictions and were in fact significant in areas such as agriculture, education, health, science, and civilian space cooperation. For many decades until the 1970s, India was one of the largest recipients of US development assistance. Beyond food aid, which made America visible to millions of ordinary Indians, Washington's generosity paid for numerous Indian public sector programs in fields such as agriculture, infrastructure, and higher education, in effect funding its 'leviathan state' (Kamath 1992). Substantial private activities complemented official US assistance; a number of major American foundations such as Ford, Rockefeller, and others established residence in India—where they remain to this day—in support of these efforts.

Despite the evident persistence of cooperation, the structural problems and the policies they provoked prevented US–Indian ties from reaching their full potential—the potential that was believed to exist at independence and which inhere in their commonality as democratic states. The US–Indian relationship, consequently, began to display a sine wave-like alternation for most of the post-war period until the dissolution of the Soviet Union: when the national priorities of both sides demanded improved ties, a deepening of relations occurred, more usually than not succeeded by a weakening of bonds when the immediate imperatives that drove the rapprochement disappeared.

Thus, the hopeful expectancy of the Roosevelt era slowly gave way to the dismay of containment, first during the Truman presidency and later, and more acutely, during Eisenhower's term in office. Bilateral ties sharply improved during the Kennedy period and, in fact, reached their Cold War apotheosis as a result of American assistance to India during the 1962 Sino-Indian war. Thereafter, the relationship slowly deteriorated thanks to Johnson's distractions in Vietnam and his irritation with Indian opposition to US policy in South-East Asia at a time when New Delhi still looked to Washington for economic, and especially food, aid. The downward trajectory continued under Nixon, reaching its nadir during the 1971 Indo-Pakistani War, when Washington's deployment of the USS *Enterprise* to the Bay of Bengal was seen the ultimate embodiment of a US policy that was deeply threatening to India.

Both nations attempted to repair their fractured ties under Jimmy Carter and Morarji Desai and, subsequently, under Ronald Reagan and Indira Gandhi, when the relationship enjoyed a surprising renaissance despite Washington's renewed combativeness towards the Soviet Union. The hope for consequential change for the better persisted through the George H. W. Bush and the first term of the Clinton presidencies—without noticeable improvement, however—before ties nosedived again during Clinton's second

term. In the second full decade of the post-Cold War period, the bilateral relationship was transformed under George W. Bush, though it appears to have stagnated under Barack Obama, in part because distractions with economic and foreign policy crises in Washington were matched by the rudderless second term of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in New Delhi.

Washington and New Delhi, accordingly, have historically been caught in a low-level equilibrium trap: whether the trajectory of their relationship has been upward or downward, it has not proceeded to its maxima in either direction. This is because both the advances and the retreats derived fundamentally not from permanent convergences or unremitting divergences of interests respectively. As a result, the gains and the losses in US–Indian relations were usually bounded in both directions for both countries. While this dynamic prevented the bilateral relationship from ever sundering irrevocably, it also left well-wishers in both countries with a wistful yearning for better ties that never seemed to come.

This fact notwithstanding, the US–Indian relationship today subsists at its highest level since at least 1962, if not 1947. The question of whether the traditional variation in trajectory will continue or whether the post-Cold War era will finally realize the ambition of making permanent the transformation in US–Indian ties, then, becomes the central question. On its answer hinges the prospect of forging a durable strategic partnership between the world's oldest and largest democracies.

The Struggle for Partnership: Beyond the Cold War

Any effort to assess the future of US–Indian relations must begin with an attempt to understand whether the fundamental constraints that prevented the development of close bilateral ties in the past have disappeared irrevocably. In retrospect, it is obvious that the three consequences that prevented closer relations—India's pursuit of non-alignment, its emphasis on maintaining a closed command economy, and its nuclear weapons program—all underwent important changes after the end of the Cold War. These changes unlocked the transformation in ties fostered by prime ministers Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Manmohan Singh on the Indian side and by President George W. Bush on the US side.

The most dramatic shift that enabled this renewed bilateral engagement obviously had nothing to do with India. It had much to do, ironically, with the success of containment—the policy pursued by the United States in the face of Indian opposition for over 40 years—which led ultimately to the collapse of its communist rival and the disintegration of the Warsaw Pact. The demise of the Soviet Union suddenly removed from the scene a superpower that had protected Indian interests since at least 1971, and it made the Indian policy of non-alignment irrelevant in one fell swoop. Although

non-alignment's germinal idea of protecting India's freedom of action would survive the disappearance of the competing power blocs, the fact remains that 'there is nothing unique about India's quest for preserving "strategic autonomy"' (Tellis 2012: 39). The defense, and even expansion, of decisional independence, far from being distinctive to India, indeed represents the aim of all states in any competitive international system. But the atrophy of non-alignment in the unique sense that defined the eponymous 'Movement'—refusal to get enmeshed in competing Cold War alliances—removed a major irritant in US–Indian relations. In so doing, it freed New Delhi to seek new forms of engagement with the sole superpower—and many other states—as successive Indian governments sought to do in the last decade of the twentieth century.

The circumstances that made such a quest significant began occurring even earlier but reached their consummation—serendipitously—in the same year that the Soviet Union collapsed. Beginning in the late 1980s, when it became evident that India's command economy had failed to deliver either growth or equity domestically, New Delhi cautiously initiated some modest economic reforms. These reforms slowly increased India's growth rates from their previously abysmal average of 3.5 per cent to something closer to 5.5 per cent, but even this improvement could not stave off India's 1991 balance of payments crisis, its worst since independence. This disaster forced India to embark on more fundamental reform of its national economy, dismantling its price and production controls and opening itself to international trade and investment in a manner without precedent. These changes pushed the economy into a higher growth band of around 7.5 per cent, soon making India a 'big emerging market' and one of the motors of growth in the global system—in short, an economy that every other country wanted to be connected with. The United States was no exception and bilateral trade grew dramatically, making India for the first time a desirable commercial partner of the United States.

The functional demise of both non-alignment and autarky within some two decades created new opportunities for the United States and India to attempt to repair their relations. A series of dispensations in New Delhi and Washington attempted to do just that throughout the 1990s, but the remaining outstanding dispute over India's nuclear weapons always intervened. This bickering became acute from 1995 onwards when the United States secured the indefinite extension of the NPT and, after an interval of many decades, concluded the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Both developments were perceived as deeply troubling by New Delhi. When Prime Minister Vajpayee finally decided that India would challenge the global non-proliferation system by becoming an overt nuclear power through five dramatic nuclear tests in 1998, the United States was confronted with the choice of either opposing this development and seeking to restore the status quo ante or accepting it and starting afresh with New Delhi.

President Bill Clinton, choosing the former course, imposed sanctions on India and sent the bilateral relationship into yet another tailspin that lasted two years. His successor, President George W. Bush, reversed course and over his two terms in office forged a unique nuclear cooperation agreement with India. Washington expended extraordinary political capital to secure both congressional consent for amending US domestic law and agreement within the international Nuclear Suppliers' Group to permit global

nuclear trade with India. The epochal decision by President Bush to pursue such a partnership with India was driven by two interacting reasons: 'viewing India as part of the solution to nuclear proliferation rather than as part of the problem' (Tellis 2005: 6) his administration concluded that 'help[ing] India become a major world power in the twenty-first century' (US Department of State 2005) served American interests effectively in the face of rising Chinese power in Asia. The exertions of the Bush administration from 2005 to 2008 convinced Indian elites about the sincerity of American interest in developing a new strategic partnership with India—a view that his successor, Barack Obama, tried to sustain through his decisions to extend fuel reprocessing rights to New Delhi and to endorse India's candidacy for permanent membership in the UN Security Council.

But even with this last outstanding policy impediment removed, the feasibility of a genuine strategic partnership remains uncertain, since history demonstrates that the two countries' shared democratic tradition is not sufficient to secure such a relationship. The three structural constraints that characterized US–Indian interactions since 1947 have not disappeared, even though their policy consequences have atrophied in varying degrees. For example, the contrasts in worldview still endure. The United States views international politics as a hegemonic power and remains determined to preserve its primacy; in contrast, India views the international system from the perspective of a subaltern state and desires a multipolar system. Although this divergence may seem abstract at first sight, it nonetheless produces practical disagreements especially in regard to diplomatic cooperation over questions of global order. The differences in national priorities persist as well. The United States seeks to renew its civilian economy and its military power through the aggressive expansion of the liberal economic order internationally; India, in contrast, while profiting from that order and desiring its enlargement in principle, is wedded to a much more cautious approach, in fact, often impeding it in an effort to protect the nation's economic development from the pains of globalization. And the asymmetries in power between the United States and India, while diminishing somewhat modestly as a result of rising Indian growth, nevertheless survive quite durably. While India is steadily doing better in regards to economic performance, it still lags behind the United States dramatically where the motor of economic growth is concerned—the capacity to foment disruptive innovation—not to mention the persistently sharp differentials in military capabilities, alliance partners, dominance in international institutions, and ideational influence.

Given these realities, it seems unlikely that democracy by itself would be able to overcome the quite substantial gulf that divides the United States and India. In the first instance, then, a 'strategic' partnership could prove all but elusive largely because both sides have different views of what would constitute such a desirable partnership. Here, as in much else, the two countries are once again prisoners of their history and their circumstances. The United States desires the rise of Indian power and has proved capable of making spectacular contributions toward that end, but there is no unanimity among American elites about the extent of the costs that the United States should bear in order to reach this goal. With few exceptions, most American policy-makers view aiding

India as desirable, but at the same time believe that such assistance imposes on India some minimal obligations of 'diffuse reciprocity' (Keohane 1986). India, in contrast, continuing in the tradition defined early on by Nehru himself, welcomes all meaningful American contributions toward enhancing its national power, but seeks to protect its freedom to part ways with the United States whenever its other interests might so demand.

This antithesis, however, could be attenuated in the future by the fact that the traditional commonality of values between the United States and India is now complemented by two other important factors. First, an increasingly robust set of inter-societal ties has emerged based on growing US–Indian economic and cultural linkages. Second, and perhaps more importantly, there now exists a new and remarkable convergence of national interests between the United States and India. Today and for the foreseeable future, the evolving challenges in the international system imply that both Washington and New Delhi will be bound by common concerns that include defeating jihadi terrorism, arresting the further spread of weapons of mass destruction, protecting the global commons, preserving the multilateral trading order, ensuring food and energy security, and managing climate change.

But beyond all these issues lies one gigantic confluence of unparalleled significance: the rise of China. The emergence of China as a global power fundamentally challenges both the United States and India in different, but complementary, ways. Beijing's ascendancy would be dangerous to Washington if it precipitates a power transition at the core of the global system and undermines the US-backed security and trading systems in Asia, not to mention the other challenges posed to American values and interests in more peripheral regions of the world. China's growing preeminence would be dangerous to India if it results in the entrenchment of a new superpower on India's doorstep—an outcome that could permanently eclipse New Delhi as an Asian center of influence (especially in South Asia), precipitate irreversible transformations in the local military balance, and enable the successful assertion of all of Beijing's territorial claims.

These objective conditions for cooperation in balancing China drove the transformation in US–India relations during the Bush administration and provide incentives for both nations to further deepen their partnership. Obviously the shape and the extent of this collaboration will be determined by a triad of variables: the robustness of China's rise and the intensity of its assertive behaviors, the nature of the American strategic response to China's surge, and the Indian reaction to both China's and America's trajectories as well as their conduct. What complicates matters further is that China today, unlike the rising powers of the past, is deeply entwined with both its global and regional rivals—including the United States and India—by unprecedented bonds of economic interdependence, thus making security competition between these entities a 'mixed-sum' game of enormous intricacy. The pressures leading to convergence in US–Indian relations as a result of China's rise, then, automatically get diluted because of the differentials in relative interdependence, relative vulnerability, and perceived dependability of the other partner. The US–Indian 'strategic partnership', accordingly,

becomes something to be produced by assiduous effort on both sides rather than a spontaneous outcome that eventuates automatically.

The history of bilateral relations during the Bush era suggests that three ingredients were essential for forging successful cooperation: policy entrepreneurs with 'big ideas', determined leadership at the highest levels on both sides, and committed 'pile drivers' within the bureaucracy capable of implementing their leaders' intentions. Absent any one of these factors, the transformation of bilateral relations could be stymied by the still-strong headwinds impeding the relationship's productive evolution. In the United States, bolstering ties with India is not a pressing foreign policy priority given that Washington still has other stronger and more committed allies willing to readily partner with it in managing the challenges posed by China. In India, the US relationship with both Pakistan and China fuels doubts about American credibility in different ways, and the country as a whole has yet to rid itself of many old suspicions of the United States nurtured since the Cold War.

While some of these impediments could erode over time, the fact remains that meaningful bilateral cooperation will remain challenging even when Washington and New Delhi agree on many issues. The differentials in raw power between the United States and India are still too great and could produce differences in operational objectives, even when the overarching interests are preeminently compatible. Beyond raw power, bilateral collaboration could still be stymied by competing national preferences over the strategies used to realize certain objectives, and differences in negotiating styles and tactics may sometimes divide the two sides. Finally, the vagaries of democratic domestic politics could pull both countries episodically away from what rational action would demand.

All these elements collectively suggest that the US–Indian strategic partnership will neither be effortless nor easy. Still less will it result in the two nations either seeking or ending up in a formal alliance of any sort—short of the most desperate circumstances which in all likelihood would impact India more than they would the United States. The most valuable operational bequest that US–Indian engagement could, therefore, yield routinely is strategic coordination, where Washington and New Delhi end up working toward the attainment of certain common goals, tacitly for the most part but without excluding the possibility of conscious collusion whenever that proves appropriate or necessary.

When the prospects for a genuine strategic partnership are considered, therefore, the key point is that achieving such an outcome will be taxing, but it is possible—if both sides can agree on some minimally acceptable notion of reciprocity. Washington, for its part, has reconciled itself to the fact that India will never become a formal ally, but it nonetheless hopes for productive cooperation in many diverse areas. So long as US policy-makers keep the geopolitical imperatives that drove the transformation of bilateral relations front and center in their dealings with New Delhi, Indian diffidence in partnering with the United States will be attenuated. For such collaboration to become meaningful, however, India will have to shed its traditional expectation that its importance warrants perpetual special treatment and support of the kind usually offered only

to formal allies, even while New Delhi persists in maintaining its prerogative to oppose Washington. Successfully working in concert in the future will, therefore, require both sides, but especially India, to recognize the importance of 'the exchange of considerations' (Waltz 1979: 113).

Even if these new terms of association can be successfully forged to engender productive bilateral cooperation, each partner is likely to emphasize different aspects of the quest. For the United States, the ultimate value of the US–Indian relationship is that it helps preserve American primacy and the exercise thereof by cementing an affiliation that aids in the preservation of the balance of power in Asia, enhances American competitiveness through deepened linkages with a growing Indian economy, and strengthens the American vision of a concert of democratic states by incorporating a major non-Western exemplar of successful democracy. For India, the ultimate value of the US–Indian relationship is that it helps New Delhi to expand its national power more easily than it might have done otherwise, it limits the dangers that might be posed by unrestrained Chinese power, and it helps to legitimize India's entrance on the world stage if such occurs with American acquiescence, not to mention support.

Although any growth that occurs in Indian capabilities in this way leads inexorably towards a 'multipolar' world—a reality that, strictly speaking, implies the demise of American hegemony—the leadership in New Delhi is realistic enough to understand that American primacy is unlikely to be dethroned any time soon and certainly not as a result of the growth in Indian power. Rather, because Indian power and national ambitions will find assertion in geographic and issue areas that are more likely to be contested immediately by China rather than by the United States, both American and Indian policy-makers astutely recognize that only protective benefits accrue to New Delhi from American primacy, despite India's own formal—but not substantive—discomfort with such a concept.

Given this fact, not only is a close US–Indian relationship possible, it is fundamentally necessary because both countries will be increasingly critical to the achievement of those goals valued by each side. This consideration acquires even greater salience given that there are no differences in vital interests—despite whatever the tensions may be in the two countries' grand strategies or national priorities—which would cause either state to levy mortal threats against the other or to undercut the other's core objectives on any issue of strategic importance. These two realities, informed by the convergence in interests, values, and inter-societal ties, provide a basis for practical cooperation between the United States and India.

These foundations make the US–Indian affiliation unique among Washington's relationships with the other major, continental-sized nations in Asia. The fact that the United States and India would never threaten each other's security by force of arms—and have never done so historically despite moments of deep disagreement—provides an enormous cushion of comfort because it insulates policy-makers on both sides from having to confront the prospect of how to manage the most lethal threats that may otherwise be imagined. US relations with neither Russia nor China enjoy any comparable protection. Therefore, even when US–Indian relations may be confronted by profound

disputation, these altercations would be no better and no worse than those arising with other friends and allies. This phenomenon in effect, then, bounds the lowest limits of the relationship: while disagreements between friends and allies are never desirable, there is at least the reassurance that any such disputes will not end in violent conflict and that by itself creates the opportunity for exploring 'positive sum' solutions. If such outcomes can be produced, the continuing struggle for an enduring US–Indian partnership will have proven to be a worthwhile investment in the long-term security and relative power positions of both India and the United States.

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CHAPTER 36

WESTERN EUROPE

CHRISTIAN WAGNER

INDIA enjoys traditionally good relations with the European Union (EU) and its Member States. In 1962, India was the first developing country to establish diplomatic relations with the European Community. The bilateral relationship was expanded with various cooperation agreements in 1973, 1981, and 1994. The EU–India Enhanced Partnership Agreement in 1996 appreciated India's economic successes after the liberalization in 1991. With the first summit meeting in Lisbon in 2000 the EU acknowledged India's new global importance after the end of the Cold War. Since that time, India belongs to the small group of countries that include the United States, China, Russia, Japan, and Canada among others with whom the EU holds regular summits.

The Hague Summit in November 2004 under the British EU presidency marked another milestone in the bilateral relationship because both sides agreed to enter into a strategic partnership. In September 2005, the EU and India adopted an ambitious and wide-ranging Joint Action Plan (JAP) which set the course for the future EU–India strategic partnership.

India and the EU are often described as 'natural partners' (Gomes 2007: 6; Peral 2012: 10) because they share common values like democracy and the commitment to a plural society and, moreover, have coinciding interests for instance in the fight against terrorism. But India remained also a difficult partner for the EU in many global governance forums as it has pursued different positions, for instance in trade, security, environment, and climate policy (Jain 2007; Bava 2008; Wuelbers 2010). This has triggered a critical debate about the partnership being a 'charade' (Jaffrelot 2006), a 'loveless arranged marriage' (Khandekar 2011), or about being at the 'risk of stagnation and political marginalization' (von Muenchow-Pohl 2012) or just being characterized by 'friendly disinterest' (Gröning 2012).

But despite the justified complaints, the overall relations between Europe and India remain very good, especially when the perspective is widened beyond the EU and when the Member States, especially France, Germany, and the United Kingdom, as well as their specific bilateral interests and long-standing relations with India are taken into account. Independent from the EU framework, all three countries have their own strategic partnership agreements with India underlining the importance of their respective bilateral relationships.

The first part of this chapter will focus on the different actors and interests. The second part will look at the different policy areas in which Western Europe, i.e. the EU and its members, meet with India. The analysis shows a typical pattern that differences between the EU and India do not rule out cooperation between India and the Member States. Besides, India also maintains relations with non-EU states in Western Europe like Switzerland, Norway, Iceland, and Liechtenstein, which form the European Free Trade Area (EFTA). Although they are important for the Indian industry, for instance in the field of intellectual property rights which hamper a free trade agreement (*The Economic Times* 2014), the relations with the EFTA will not be analyzed here.

Actors and Interests

India's relations with Western Europe are characterized by dichotomy and complementarity between the foreign policies of the EU and the Commission in Brussels on the one hand, and the foreign policies of the Member States on the other. With the development of supranational institutions like the European Commission, the EU has developed a *sui generis* structure that is neither a nation state nor an international organization but a political entity with different and unique forms of multi-level governance. This means, that the European Commission and/or the 28 Member States are responsible for foreign relations depending on the respective policy field. The Treaty of Lisbon and the creation of new institutions like the The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, often called the foreign minister of the EU, and the European External Action Service (EEAS), have not changed this fundamental segmentation, which makes it so difficult to understand European foreign policy.

In contrast, India has a traditional institutional set-up in which the government and the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in collaboration with other ministries are responsible for foreign policy issues. Comparing diplomatic capacities shows a strong imbalance between India and Western Europe. India only has some 800 diplomats (which is on the level of Singapore or New Zealand), whereas Germany alone has more than 2,000 diplomats. Hence, bilateral relations are marked by an unequal structure depending on the policy fields and the number of actors involved.

The common interests of India and the EU were formulated in the strategic partnership agreement and the JAP. The first draft of the EU emphasized topics like democracy, human rights, and conflict prevention whereas India put a stronger focus on economic and technological cooperation (Council of the European Union 2004). Both sides agreed on five key areas of cooperation (Council of the European Union 2005) that included:

1. Strengthening dialogue and consultation mechanisms.
2. Deepening political dialogue and cooperation on human rights, democracy, regional cooperation, multilateralism, peacekeeping, terrorism, and non-proliferation.

3. Bringing together people and cultures with a focus on strengthening academic exchange.
4. Enhancing economic policy dialogue and cooperation with a focus on industry, science and technology, transport, environment, and energy.
5. Developing trade and investment.

As a result of the summit in Marseille 2008, the revision of the JAP placed a stronger focus on issues like peace and comprehensive security, sustainable development, research and technology, as well as people-to-people and cultural exchanges (EU–India Summit 2008).

Economic Cooperation

Economic relations including trade and investment form the core of the bilateral relationship. With its economic liberalization in 1991, India has moved away from its previous model of mixed economy to the integration into the global economy with export promotion and foreign direct investment (FDI). The EU became India's largest trading partner with a value of €86 billion in trade in goods and services in 2010. The EU has a share of 19 per cent of India's total export and 14 per cent of its total imports. India has a share of 2.6 per cent of the total EU exports and 2.2 per cent of its imports (European Union 2012a). Trade in services saw a tremendous increase from €5.2 billion in 2002 to €22.5 billion in 2012. Hence, India has improved its rank of the EU main trading partners from 15th in 2002 to 8th in 2010 (European Commission 2014). The main export items of the EU to India are machineries, whereas textiles form the bulk of India's exports to the EU.

The EU became the second largest investor in India between 2000 and 2011 with a share of 21 per cent of Indian FDI mainly from the United Kingdom, Germany, Netherlands, France, Italy, and Belgium (Khorana and Garcia 2013: 686). In recent years, Indian direct investments to Europe have also increased considerably, highlighting the new global position of the Indian industry. Indian investments reached their highest level in 2008 with €3.5 billion when they were higher than EU investments to India for the first time. Because of the economic crisis in Europe, Indian investments slowed down after 2008. The cumulative direct investments of the EU to India have a volume of €37.6 billion since 2000 whereas the Indian cumulative investment to Europe since 2000 is €10 billion (Adith 2012: 20).

In order to further intensify their economic relations, India and the EU have entered into negotiations on a Bilateral Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA) in 2007. However, the original deadline of 2009 could not be realized since India's main interest seemed to be a '"shallow" FTA' whereas the EU was pursuing a '"deep integration"

agenda' (Khorana and Garcia 2013: 688). Even after seven years and at least 14 rounds of negotiations no breakthrough could be achieved until today.

There are different sets of controversies that deal with both the subjects under negotiations as well as with general clauses. The EU wants India to drastically reduce its tariffs for automobiles, wines, and spirits. Moreover, the EU is pressing for greater market access in the service sector especially in banking, retail, telecommunication, legal and accounting services (Singh 2012). India on the other hand is pressing for better market access to the EU for fruits, vegetables, and fishery products and demands better access and freedom of movement for its professionals in the service sector in Europe (Khandekar and Sengupta 2012: 4–5). Moreover, according to a resolution of the European Parliament, the EU is obligated to include legally binding clauses on human rights, labor standards, and environmental issues. These clauses could become a 'potential deal breaker' (Khorana and Garcia 2013: 694) since India vehemently objects to them. In contrast to India's entry into the World Trade Organization in 1995, the public awareness and opposition against the Free Trade Agreement with the EU is much higher and has already led to protests and demonstrations against the EU demanding the inclusion of clauses on intellectual property rights (Shankar 2012).

Science and Technology

Another focus of India–EU relations is cooperation in the field of science and technology. India is participating in the European navigation system Galileo and the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER). India's intellectual potential in bio- and nano-technology and the high reputation of the Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT) has led to an enormous increase of cooperation with universities and research institutions in EU Member States. In the context of the JAP, the EU has supported the creation of Centers for European Studies in India as well as for Contemporary Indian Studies in Europe in recent years, in order to increase mutual knowledge and to foster new academic networks. Since 2009, the EU is supporting the Initiative for the Development and Integration of Indian and European Research (New INDIGO) for more academic collaboration and the India4EU II program as part of its Erasmus Mundus program for student exchange.

Because of the historical linkages, the use of English in higher education in India, and the Indian diaspora, the United Kingdom has always enjoyed the closest academic relationships with India. But in recent years, both Germany and France have invested heavily in order to attract more Indian students to their countries and to promote academic exchange with India. Germany started its academic exchange with India as early as 1958 when it supported the creation of the IIT in Madras. After the state visits of the German chancellors Gerhard Schroeder in 2004 and Angela

Merkel in 2007 cooperation in science and technology became one of the main pillars in the bilateral relationship. In 2008, an Indo-German Science and Technology Center was established in New Delhi to further increase academic cooperation. In the meantime, nearly all main German universities have established their own programs with India and all major German science organizations are represented with their own offices in India. The various initiatives have led to more than 60 university partnerships between Indian and German universities. In the winter term 2012/13 there were some 7,500 Indian students enrolled at German universities and around 1,000 German students enrolled in higher education institutions in India (German Federal Foreign Office). Germany is also supporting various initiatives in the field of vocational training in order to address the grievances of the Indian industry about the lack of skilled workers. France has also increased its academic collaboration with India in recent years so that there were 2,500 Indian students in France in 2011 (Institut Français).

Development Cooperation

Despite its spectacular economic growth rates India is to a large extent still a developing country, which is also underlined by its rank 136 on the Human Development Index (HDI) in 2013. In order to project its new image as an emerging economy and to avoid conditionality in the field of human rights, the government led by Atal Bihari Vajpayee of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) reduced India's development cooperation with most Western countries in 2003 (Marcelo 2003). The EU together with Germany, France, and the United Kingdom were among the few actors that continued development cooperation with India. One of the main interests of the EU was to support India in its endeavors to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) by 2015. The EU country strategy paper for India (2007–13) aimed to spend 60–70 per cent of the resources in social sector support, i.e. health and education, whereas only 30–40 per cent were targeted for the implementation of the JAP (European External Action Service 2008: 16).

In contrast to the EU, the Member States have developed different focal points in their development cooperation with India. India has always been among Germany's most important partners in official development assistance (ODA) which started already in the 1950s. Germany's ODA with India has moved away from traditional technical support in sectors like health and education. Today, Germany is supporting India in three focal areas: energy efficiency and renewable energy, environmental protection and adaption to climate change, as well as sustainable economic development including social security systems. Because of India's economic achievements, the United Kingdom will also restructure its development cooperation with India after 2015 with a stronger focus on technical collaboration (*The Guardian* 2012).

Foreign and Security Policy

India and the EU share many threat perceptions about global and regional security challenges. This became evident when the European Security Strategy (ESS) was published in 2003 (Council of the European Union 2003). So far, India has not published a similar document but various speeches of the Prime Minister, and the Defense and the Foreign Ministers show a great overlap in security perceptions, for instance with regard to terrorism, failed states, and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (Ministry of Defense 2006).

In the JAP 2005 both sides agreed on a number of exchanges, consultative mechanisms, and dialogues on various political levels on 'Democracy and Human Rights', 'Effective Multilateralism', 'Peacekeeping, Peace-Building and Post-Conflict Assistance', 'Disarmament and Non-Proliferation of WMD and Security Dialogue' among other things (Council of the European Union 2005). The consensus on terrorism as a main threat was underlined by the Joint Declaration on International Terrorism at the summit in 2010. But both sides had difficulties entering into more concrete cooperation. The EU lacks the central authority in this field, which is handled by the Member States. In India, several chief ministers refused the creation of a National Counter Terrorism Centre which would infringe state competencies (von Muenchow-Pohl 2012: 23–4).

On the international level, India is one of the most important troop contributors to the United Nations. In Europe, only the Member States not the EU, can deploy troops. So far, the EU puts stronger emphasis on a soft power approach as it lacks its own military capabilities. It therefore does not astonish that Indian security analysts do not perceive the EU as a relevant strategic player and that they are more oriented towards the United States, Russia, China, and Japan (Lisbonne-de Vergeron 2006; Jain and Pandey 2010).

India and Europe support the process of democratization. India is the biggest non-Western donor in Afghanistan and has already committed economic assistance of nearly US$2 billion. Moreover, India has also expanded its security cooperation with Afghanistan in recent years. However, between India and the EU or its Member States there has hardly been any attempt to cooperate in areas of common interest like in Afghanistan.

A similar development could be observed in the fight against piracy in the Indian Ocean. India and the EU share the common interest of securing the sea lanes of communication in the Indian Ocean. In order to fight piracy and to secure freedom of navigation, the international community has put up various so-called Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) under the leadership of the US Naval Forces Central Command. In 2008, the EU set up the operation *Atalanta* before the Somali coast under a mandate from the United Nations to secure the supplies of the World Food Program. Indian maritime forces were also patrolling but there was hardly any noteworthy collaboration between the different navies. India refused a proposal by the United States and the EU to set up

a joint patrol base on the Seychelles. The Indian government did not want to focus on anti-piracy missions but aimed at a broader focus on the reasons of political instability in the region (Venkatshamy 2013).

Military and defense relations between India and major EU Member States like Germany, France, and the United Kingdom have improved in recent years. India overtook China as the single largest arms importer in 2011 (Menon 2013). Although the bulk of arms imports comes from Russia, European countries like France and the United Kingdom have also expanded their arms exports to India (Foundation for National Security Research 2011: 9–10).

Moreover, the European countries are pursuing their own bilateral agendas. India has strategic partnership agreements or similar documents with France (since 1998), Germany (2000), and the United Kingdom (2004) (Foundation for National Security Research 2011: 4–6). Germany has continued to expand its political cooperation with India in recent years. In 2011, Germany and India had their first government consultations on the cabinet level which underlined again the increasing importance that Germany has given to India. In 2013, both countries agreed on a common declaration to further develop their bilateral strategic and global partnership.

Democracy and Human Rights

India and Europe, both the EU and the Member States, normally praise their common democratic values, and their commitment to human rights and pluralism. But India and the EU pursue very different approaches to promote democracy, human rights, and conflict prevention measures. The EU and the Member States have promoted these topics with a variety of instruments, from the conditionality in official development cooperation to the election observer missions to concrete engagement, for instance, in the Sri Lankan civil war when the EU became one of the Co-Chairs after the ceasefire in 2002.

Deliberations to promote democratic governance have played only a marginal role in India's foreign policy. The emphasis of non-interference and national sovereignty as fundamental norms of India's external relations has muted such a debate for a long time. It was only in the context of improving relations with the United States that India started to support multilateral institutions like the United Nations Democracy Fund since 2005 (Raja Mohan 2007; Wagner 2009). Various reports of the Defense Ministry and speeches by Foreign Minister Pranab Mukherjee indicated that India does not intend to export her ideas of political order (Varadarajan 2007). Nevertheless, in the context of Indian technical assistance to developing countries, the Election Commission set up the India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management (IIDEM) in 2011. It aims to 'promote social awareness, voter education and democratic values and practices, enhance, build human resource and capacities, for efficient conduct of free, fair and periodic elections in India and develop partnership as well as collaboration with other countries' (Bhagbanprakash 2011: 14).

Despite the common goals and increasing capacities it is difficult to imagine closer cooperation in the field of democracy promotion. While India is focusing on the technical aspects, the EU election observer missions have a clearer political mandate, which is also used in the context of its foreign policy vis-à-vis the respective countries.

Human rights have been a constant source of irritation and criticism in the bilateral relationship. India and Europe adhere to the same concept of human rights and have signed various international human rights treaties. But communal riots, human rights violations by security forces, or violence against marginalized groups and untouchables have often created critical reactions by the European Parliament and the EU Commission (*The Hindu* 2013). The debate about the potential negative influence of foreign non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that came up in summer 2014 after Prime Minister Modi took office will also affect European NGOs and can mar the bilateral relationship.

Global Governance and Multilateralism

India and the EU share similar ideas on the future structure of the international system. Both sides have emphasized the concept of a multi-polar world, have declared their commitment to strengthen the system of the United Nations, and have highlighted multilateral institutions for crisis management (Ministry of Defense 2006: 2).

But it should not be overlooked that the common threat perceptions were embedded in different foreign policy settings. The EU has always promoted an effective, i.e. rule-based, multilateralism which implies interference in internal affairs. Therefore, the EU and European countries support the International Criminal Court (ICC) and are in favor of the concept of Responsibility to Protect (R2P). In contrast to this, India has always emphasized the principle of national sovereignty and has constantly rejected any interference into internal affairs outside the UN framework. India abstained from its vote when the ICC was established in 1998. The Indian government seemed to be aware that the capacities of its own judicial system were not sufficient to comply with the requirements of this new institution (Ganguly 2014: 90). Moreover, India fears that internal conflicts like in Kashmir or in the northeast could be referred to such an international institution. India also had a critical stance towards humanitarian intervention and argued that the final permission on humanitarian interventions should be with the General Assembly rather than with the Security Council of the United Nations (Ganguly 2014: 89). India continued its critical position towards R2P and abstained from the vote on the intervention in Libya, which was supported by the European countries. This kind of potential outside interference is not compatible with the Indian concept of strategic autonomy, which prefers a policy of selective rather than effective, i.e. binding multilateralism.

But again, the European countries also pursue their own agenda with India. Germany and India, together with Brazil and Japan, have formed the G-4 group which aims at a reform of the Security Council of the United Nations in order to expand the number of permanent members. India has supported its claim with its long-standing engagement in peacekeeping forces, whereas Germany belongs to the most important financial contributors to the United Nations and its organizations. The G-4 challenges indirectly the position of France and the United Kingdom in the Security Council. The inclusion of Germany as a permanent member would increase the weight of Europe which would not be acceptable to the developing countries. This would trigger a debate about an EU seat which in turn would be unacceptable for France and the United Kingdom.

Climate Change and Sustainable Development

The repercussions of climate change are regarded as a common challenge by both the EU and India. Again, as in other areas, both sides find it difficult to cooperate on this common issue on the multilateral level. But this has not ruled out bilateral collaboration between the EU and its members and India.

India has an interest in the success of negotiations on climate change and sustainable development which may provide technology transfer and financial support. But, as in many other areas, India is not willing to enter into any kind of legally binding commitments. India has always emphasized the two principles of equity and 'common but differentiated responsibilities' (CBDR). This highlights the responsibility of the developed countries that were the main emitters in the past to undertake greater efforts to reduce their emissions. India is willing to make small and symbolic concessions, for instance when Prime Minister Manmohan Singh announced that India's per capita emissions of greenhouse gases would never exceed those of industrialized countries (Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs 2009). Another example of India's voluntary assurance in Copenhagen was to reduce emission intensity of its GDP by 20–5 per cent till 2020 compared to the 2005 level (Government of India, Ministry of Environment and Forests 2012).

The Rio+20 Summit underlined again the incompatible positions of India and the EU. The summit was more successful for India than for the EU because India could include some of its main principles into the document 'The Future We Want'. Moreover, India was able to prevent the transformation of the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) into the United Nations Environmental Organization (UNEO) which was supported by the EU. India has also made it clear that a future Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) catalogue of indicators should not become obligatory and time bound like the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). For India, the 'context of MDGs and SDGs ... are disparate' (Government of India 2012). Therefore, India's emphasis on

different national priorities and approaches to achieve sustainable development questions the EU's approach for having binding international regulations and commitments. In India, they are often regarded as an obstacle and sometimes even as a strategy by the developed countries to prevent industrial modernization of emerging economies (Chaudhuri 2012).

But despite the fundamental differences, India has intensified bilateral cooperation in the energy and environment sector both with the EU and with individual Member States. In the context of the JAP, an EU–India environment forum, a Joint Working Group on Environment, an EU–India Energy Panel, and an EU–India Initiative on Clean Development and Climate Change were established.

Sustainable development and climate change received greater attention with the EU–India summit in Marseille in 2008. New issues and activities were added to the JAP, for instance the promotion of sustainable development in the context of 'unprecedented pressure on energy and natural resources' (EU–India Summit 2008). Moreover, a Joint Work Program on Energy, Clean Development and Climate Change and a European Business & Technology Centre were introduced. Thus, since 2008, the partnership comprises a broad set of activities from the public as well as the private sector such as technology transfer, funding, research and development, and capacity building (Government of India 2012; European Union 2012).

At the 2009 summit in Delhi, the EU and India agreed to concentrate on the early implementation of the Joint Program in the fields of 'solar energy, development of clean coal technology and increase in energy efficiency' (European Union 2012b: 15). Between 2000 and 2009, the EU has funded more than '100 projects worth approximately 340 million Euros related to environmental protection and sustainable development in India since 2000, and 45% of these committed funds were allocated to climate change adaptation and mitigation' (European Union 2009: 11). At the 12th summit in Delhi in 2012 the joint declaration for enhanced cooperation on energy included energy efficiency in the building sector, development of smart power grids, and energy safety among other things (Council of the European Union 2012).

In addition to this, Member States like Germany, France, the United Kingdom, and Spain have started different initiatives on climate change with India. Germany's development cooperation with India emphasizes energy and environmental issues. Germany supports various programs to improve energy efficiency and to promote solar energy and biomass. India and France decided to establish a joint working group on clean technology transfer and financing (Action for a Global Climate Community 2009: 21). German and Spanish companies are investing in India's wind energy sector (Upadhyay 2012: 82).

Prospects for Collaboration

India's relations with the EU and its Member States will continue to be productive and difficult at the same time. The often cited criticism of the EU–India partnership and the

obvious difficulty of both sides to develop common policies stem from three different sets of reasons that concentrate on identity and structure, norms and interests, as well as on ambitions and capacities.

First, much of the criticism on the EU and its partnership with India comes from the misunderstanding that the EU is a state or should act like one. But the EU is not a (nation) state like India and whether it will ever be one is one of the most heated debates in Europe. The EU is an entity *sui generis* with very diverging competencies in different policy fields. India will always have to deal with the EU when it comes to trade and financial issues and it will continue to cooperate with the Member States on (hard) security issues.

Second, the frequent reference to common values between India and Europe, such as democracy, overlooks that they are embedded in very different historical settings. The history of Western Europe after the Second World War and the development of the EU has been a legal process with constant interference into the realms of national sovereignty and the creation of supranational institutions. India's history after 1947 has been characterized by concepts like self-reliance, which have been skeptical towards outside interference after the colonial experience.

Finally, both India and the EU are characterized by a gap between ambitions and capabilities. Both are relatively weak actors in the international arena because of their institutional constraints. Even after the Treaty of Lisbon, the foreign policy of the EU will be shared between Brussels and the Member States. Therefore, the EU will remain a strong and weak actor at the same time. It is strong in those areas in which there is a common foreign policy, like in trade and development cooperation. It is weak in many (hard) security issues that remain within the domain of the national capitals.

India's size, with one-sixth of the world's population, gives the country a global importance by default. But its foreign policy is handled mostly by the under-staffed Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). This is far from being adequate to cope with the requirements of an interdependent global system and India's own aspirations to play a more important role. The government has already initiated reforms to address the issue but institutional reforms do take time, which is a common experience both in India and in Europe.

Hence, only if both sides understand the structural constraints and limitations of the other, will the partnership flourish on a more realistic basis.

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CHAPTER 37

INDIA AND RUSSIA

The Anatomy and Evolution of a Relationship

RAJAN MENON

The current configuration and future trajectory of any bilateral relationship reflect the inheritances of the past. The past does not predetermine a particular future but does provide the context within which calculations about the future are made. This is certainly true of the India–Russia relationship in the twenty-first century, not least because the two countries have had extensive, multifaceted ties for over six decades. Hence we begin with the past, specifically with the Cold War epoch.

The Cold War Era

During the Cold War (1947–91) the Soviet Union and India found their relationship beneficial and reliable. Yet it did not start out that way. Until Stalin died (March 1953), Soviet leaders and academic specialists regarded independent India as too closely tethered to the former imperial power, Britain, to be truly free. This assessment was reinforced by the Manichean mindset that emerged in Moscow once the wartime alliance with the West yielded to animosity and rivalry. Indian leaders, such as Jawaharlal Nehru, were committed to gaining and consolidating India's freedom; but they were products of an English-style education and had lived in Britain or its dominions. And they could not ignore the opportunities and constraints created by ties binding India to Britain. Many Indian leaders also hailed from the privileged classes; this too raised suspicions in Moscow, as did India's decision to join the British Commonwealth. To Moscow, India's nascent state seemed bourgeois-landlord dominated.

In the prevailing Soviet lexicon, India's leaders were a species of comprador bourgeoisie. So the USSR looked to revolutionary movements led by the Soviet-aligned Communist Party of India to create a state representing workers and peasants. Yet not a few Indian leaders (notably Nehru) admired socialism and considered the Soviet Union

a non-colonial power, a counterweight to the West, and a font of lessons for promoting rapid, state-led industrialization.

The jaundiced Soviet assessment soon changed, certainly by 1955, when Nikita Khrushchev and Nikolai Bulganin—respectively, Chairman of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Chairman of the Council of Ministers—made a much-publicized visit to India, receiving a rousing welcome. Meanwhile, India's new leaders had defied Moscow's expectations: they consolidated power and were not swept away by revolutionary gales. They proved, through the Nehurvian policy of non-alignment and the commitment to anti-colonial movements, that they were capable of independent action and were not creatures of imperialism.

Given India's size and location on the USSR's southern flank, Moscow would have been foolish to cling to an ideological perspective, the poverty of which had been demonstrated by real-world events. Besides, the American strategy of containment, which was extended to Asia following the Korean War, created overlapping interests between New Delhi and Moscow. Moscow sought to create gaps in Washington's *cordon sanitaire*, and that tactic required forging ties with countries that favored non-alignment. India, a leader of the Non-Aligned Movement, thus became a potential partner and a progressive force, part of the 'zone of peace'. Soviet diplomacy, economic aid, and military assistance were deployed to develop a substantive relationship.

For India, the Soviet connection became invaluable once Pakistan, seeking to counterbalance India, embraced containment (joining both the South East Asia Treaty Organization and the Central Treaty Organization) and gained American arms and aid in recompense. Washington took a dim view of non-alignment, something that irked Indian leaders to the benefit of Moscow.

The resulting Indo-Soviet partnership was remarkably steady and devoid of crises, a contrast to many of the USSR's relationships elsewhere in the Third World. India, for all its problems, had a well-developed bureaucracy, a civilian-controlled military, and an institutionalized democracy—a contrast to states, such as Mali, Ghana, and Egypt that were also closely tied to the Soviet Union. The Indo-Soviet relationship was not shaped by ideological considerations (Moscow paid lip service to the Soviet-oriented Communist Party of India but gave priority to its dealings with the Indian state), but by the shared practical interests.

There were periods of uncertainty and apprehension. For India, the most significant one was the 1960s, when the Soviets decided to cultivate Pakistan for several reasons. The first was the emerging Pakistan–China entente. The second was India's decision, following its defeat in the 1962 with China, to purchase American arms. The third was Pakistan's alignment with China, which unsettled Washington and provided the Kremlin an opportunity. Finally, there was the struggle in India's ruling Congress Party between what Moscow saw as progressive forces centered around Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and a rival (and 'reactionary') group led by Morarji Desai (Bajwa 1965: 52–64; Gupte 2012: 272–83).

Against this background, following the 1965 India–Pakistan war, the Soviet leaders played mediator at the Tashkent Conference and shifted to a less overtly pro-Indian

position on Kashmir. The USSR even published material inconsistent with Indian territorial claims against Pakistan. Worse, the Soviet leadership considered selling arms to Pakistan (Ray 1989: 4–28). Pakistani president Ayub Khan visited Moscow in 1965 to strike a more balanced position between the United States and the USSR and in response to American moves to arm India. In 1966, a Pakistani military delegation arrived in Moscow to explore Soviet arms sales. No agreement was signed, but when the Pakistani Foreign Minister visited Moscow the following year, the arms sales were again discussed. A Soviet naval delegation visited Pakistan in 1968 amidst reports that the Pakistani government was willing to close US intelligence installations and provide the Soviet navy access to its ports, in exchange for Soviet arms. The head of the Soviet Council of Ministers, Alexei Kosygin, visited Pakistan in 1968 and 1969 amidst continuing speculation about Soviet arms sales to Pakistan. Soon thereafter, a Pakistan military delegation led by General Yahya Khan concluded an arms deal in Moscow.

The Soviet side continued to send senior leaders to India (including Kosygin and Defense Minister Andrei Grechko) to offer reassurances that arms deliveries to Pakistan would not harm India. This did not prevent complaints from Indian leaders, including Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and President Zakir Husain, or charges of betrayal from India's right-wing opposition, notably the Swatantra Party and the Jan Sangh. But the Soviet Union's overtures to woo Pakistan away from China failed. During the 1971 war, the Soviet Union backed India fully. The Soviet leaders had concluded by then that India had greater strategic value, that Pakistan would have always far more substantial ties with the United States and China than with the USSR, and that too much had been invested in the relationship with India to risk its unraveling.

For the Soviet side, the highpoint of uncertainty was when the Congress Party, with whose successive governments the Kremlin had become accustomed to working for over two decades, was dislodged in March 1977, having suffered an electoral defeat at the hands of the rightist Janata Party. Morarji Desai replaced Indira Gandhi as Prime Minister. The Kremlin had long viewed him as favoring closer ties with the West and a more market-driven economic strategy. The new Indian leadership also consisted of unfamiliar figures, some critics of India's alignment with the Soviet Union and of the Congress Party's socialist-inspired economic policies. Yet the fundamentals of the relationship were preserved. India's new leaders could not throw away the benefits derived from decades-long ties with the USSR, nor ignore the reality that the alignment with the Soviet Union was essential given the threat posed by China, the Beijing–Washington entente, and continuing American and Chinese support for Pakistan.

Despite such uncertainties, the relationship grew substantially during the Cold War. The USSR became India's principal source of weaponry and military training and played a peerless role in helping develop Indian defense industries by transferring military technology and authorizing the licensed production of weaponry. India's state economic sector boasted several Soviet-aided projects, including the Bhilai and Bokaro steel mills, the Ranchi Heavy Engineering Plant, Bharat Heavy Electricals, and Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals. Trade flourished, helped by the partners' agreement to use each other's currencies in settling accounts, thus conserving their hard currency reserves. By the

early 1980s the USSR was India's leading trade partner and its most important export market, accounting for a 17 per cent share (Jones 1982). By 1975, Moscow had provided India $1.3 billion in economic aid, much of it repayable at low rates in interest, and in rupees. That accounted for nearly a fifth of Moscow's aid to non-communist developing countries (Menon 1978: 744).

On the political front, high-level visits became regular and routine. And ordinary Indians developed an overwhelmingly positive view of the USSR, especially following the 1971 Indo-Soviet treaty and the India–Pakistan war of that year, when Soviet backing proved critical. By contrast, Nixon and Kissinger's embrace of Pakistan during the 1971 war featured a minor instance of gunboat diplomacy, the dispatch of the US aircraft carrier *Enterprise* into the Bay of Bengal—which was shadowed by Soviet naval vessels—in an effort to dissuade India from going to war. The Indian army may have prevailed in East Pakistan anyway, but the Indo-Soviet Treaty demonstrated to China and the United States that India was not friendless. While the Soviet leadership did try to convince India to eschew war and would not provide the quantity and caliber of arms the Indian leadership urgently sought, in the end the Kremlin did not risk the bilateral relationship by exerting pressure, perhaps realizing that it would have been fruitless.

Post-Soviet Uncertainties

India was scarcely the only country surprised by the rapid implosion of the USSR. Yet few were forced to reassess their foreign policy strategy more thoroughly as a result. First, the Soviet Union provided India a means for balancing China, which after the disastrous (from New Delhi's point of view) Sino-Indian war of 1962 became India's foremost adversary. That the Sino-Soviet split coincided with India's own turn from cooperation to conflict with China had made the partnership with the Soviet Union particularly valuable and nor did it escape New Delhi that Gorbachev's 'new thinking' on international affairs included rapprochement with China. Starting with Gorbachev's 1987 Vladivostok speech, which signaled the new approach to China, and extending through the presidency of the Russian Federation's first president, Boris Yeltsin, Chinese–Russian relations were transformed (Menon 1989). The propaganda war ceased, the territorial dispute was settled, troops were pulled back from the border and later cut, trade resumed, and—this was most disconcerting to India—China turned to Russia for weaponry. Russia would bolster China's military power with armor, airpower, ships, and submarines. By the early 1990s, the Russian and Chinese leaderships were trumpeting their 'strategic partnership' (Menon 1997). This change in the relationship between its main ally and its prime adversary was, to say the least, problematic for India.

India also had to adjust to the diminished power of, and instability within, the Russian Federation during the 1990s. Russia's resort to 'shock therapy' (rapid privatization and abandonment of central planning and resource allocation in favor of markets) produced an economic catastrophe, culminating in the 1998 financial crisis. It was not the

economic ramifications that worried Indian leaders—the Soviet Union's significance for trade and investment had declined by the 1980s—but the diminution of Russia's international standing. During the Cold War, no serious observer questioned the USSR's status as a first-rank power, but throughout the 1990s many did exactly that. And just as the Soviet Union's strength had supplemented India's security, Russia's weakness reduced it. In Russia's volatile politics, oligarchs became political power brokers, byzantine battles raged between Yeltsin and his adversaries, varied political parties and movements sprouted, and the center's hold over the provinces weakened. Yeltsin, intermittently inebriated and ailing, personified the chaos. The uncertainty complicated Indian leaders' efforts to frame policy toward Russia.

Finally, Russia leaders did not regard India as critical to their country's wider interests; they saw the United States, Europe, and China as the loci of economic and political power. The alignment with India seemed relic of the communist past. While Moscow continued to regard India as a friendly state that was consequential by virtue of its size and its importance as a market for Russian arms, its strategic salience declined, especially for younger Russian officials, such as Yeltsin's first foreign minister, Andrei Kozyrev. Russian priorities were furthering the strategic partnership with China integration into Western economic and political structures. Yeltsin did visit India in 1993, but other Russian moves worried New Delhi, including the cancellation of cryogenic rocket engines sales, following American objections, support for Pakistan's nuclear-free South Asia proposal, and criticism of India's opposition to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (Bazhanov and Bazhanov 1994).

New Delhi faced this uncertainty until Vladimir Putin became president in 2000. By then Russia was rethinking its policy toward the West, the United States in particular. Russian blamed shock therapy, widely by viewed by Russians as American in provenance, for the penury they endured in the 1990s. NATO expansion produced a backlash in Russia and Western criticism of the crackdown in Chechnya struck many Russians as unfair. Much of Russia's political elite opposed the West's embrace of humanitarian intervention and the concomitant reconceptualization of sovereignty, seeing them as camouflage for intruding into countries' internal affairs. The perception that the West was bent on undermining Russia's influence in its historic spheres of influence (such as the South Caucasus, Central Asia, and Ukraine) gained ground among them, especially with NATO's continued expansion and interventions in Bosnia and Kosovo, the 'color revolutions' in Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, and Ukraine, and the American invasion of Iraq.

Putin personified this shift in the Russian mood and scripted a systematic critique of the United States that featured attacks on unilateralism, the defense of sovereignty, and support for a multipolar world. At home, he strengthened the state's political and economic role, reclaimed power from the provinces, and squeezed the opposition. To the West, especially the United States, these developments denoted that authoritarianism and anti-Westernism was rising in Russia and civil liberties declining. But criticism only made Russia's relationship with the West worse and tightened its bonds with a like-minded China.

For India, Putin's consolidation of power was welcome. It ended Russia's instability and in some respects represented a return to the Soviet approach to the world, in which India was seen as an essential partner. Putin certainly focused more attention on India; his multiple visits to New Delhi (2002, 2004, 2007, 2012) were but one indication of this. The shift reflected Moscow's reassessment of the United States, but was also a response to Washington's enthusiasm for cultivating India as a market and as a strategic partner for balancing a rising China. The Indo-American 'Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement' and the 'Framework Agreement' military cooperation, both reached in 2005, exemplified the new approach. Russia understood that it would have to defend the achievements of its hard-won, decades-long efforts in India. New Delhi's estrangement from Washington had worked to Moscow's advantage during the Cold War but that was a thing of the past.

Old Relationship, New Circumstances

Politics

The most important change in India–Russian relations since 2000 has been the mutual confidence that they will not be hostage to disruptions and surprises. Having dealt with one another for decades, the two countries have established substantial trust and understanding, a convergent worldview, and a stake in preserving a relationship that few countries can claim to have. Thus it was unsurprising that Russia championed India's candidacy for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council, favored its elevation from observer status in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) to full membership, and backed its admission to the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) group. Moscow and New Delhi also used the Brazil–Russia–India–China–South Africa (BRICS) association as a forum for cooperating on a range of issues. And if Putin visited India often, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh more than reciprocated, making nine trips to Moscow after assuming office in 2004. Singh's successor, Narendra Modi, will not jeopardize the benefits of India's close relationship with Russia.

Like the Soviet Union before it, Russia does not judge India's economic policies or conduct in Kashmir; and India refrains from criticizing Russia's crackdown in the North Caucasus, its quest for preponderance in its neighborhood, and its drift toward authoritarianism. By contrast, internal differences continually create friction between Russia and the West. Consider the European and American criticism of the unfairness of Russian elections or the erosion of civil liberties in Putin's Russia. Whatever their personal views on such matters, Indian leaders avoid airing them in public.

Moreover, neither in India nor in Russia are there influential organizations or constituencies that lobby their governments to shape the other's domestic policies. Indeed, both governments oppose external interference in countries' internal conflicts in the name of

liberal norms and principles and the claim that there is now a universal, Western-liberal standard against which to judge countries' governance. This shared preference for a pluralistic world order explains the opposition of India and Russia to armed humanitarian intervention that can morph into 'regime change'.

For example, both India and Russia believed that the UN-authorized, NATO-waged war against Qadhafi's Libya went beyond safeguarding civilians, the intent of UN Security Council Resolution 1973 on which both abstained, and turned into forcible regime change. Neither New Delhi nor Moscow embraced the 'Responsibility to Protect' doctrine with gusto; each was ambivalent at best. The same applied to the American invasion of Iraq: both Russia and India—and not just them—favored diplomacy within a UN framework, not unilateral intervention, as the appropriate way to deal with the weapons of mass destruction (WMD) that Washington insisted that Saddam Hussein retained. Both Moscow and New Delhi support a multipolar world order, a point expressed in their joint statements at the end of summits and, more recently, at the now-routine conclaves of the foreign ministers of India, Russia, and China. And whereas Soviet support on Kashmir mattered to New Delhi during the Cold War, in the twenty-first century it is less critical.

Thus the India–Russia relationship will endure comings and goings of leaders and governments. Whether it is terrorism, separatism, the possible re-emergence of a radical Islamist government in Afghanistan, instability in Central Asia, the drug trade, or ethnic conflict, India and Russia are of similar mind. Moreover, India poses no threat to Russia's influence in proximate regions, whether Central Asia, the South Caucasus, or Ukraine, even if that is because India lacks the ability to project its power into these places. (The contrast between the reaction of the West and India to Russia's actions in Ukraine in 2014 was striking.) Russia, for its part, has no reason to back Pakistan against India or to undermine India in such sensitive spots as Arunachal Pradesh, Kashmir, Nepal, or regions ravaged by the Naxalite insurgency.

Security

The situation is less straightforward in the military sphere. Ever since it began supplying India with armaments in the late 1950s, Russia has had a special advantage. No other supplier was willing to sell India modern weaponry in such volumes and on such preferential terms (rupee-based repayment of credits in the Soviet era), permit licensed production, or help build India's defense industries. All of this Russia is still prepared to do, but the strategic context has changed. Russia must now reckon with competition for arms sales to India—this after the USSR, at the peak, provided 80 per cent of all Indian weapons imports. While American arms companies have yet to make major inroads they certainly want to do so; and, unlike during the Cold War, the US government wants that as well.

There are other challenges. India seeks to diversify its arms purchases and has even become concerned about the quality of Russian equipment. And cost overruns have

produced Indian complaints. An example is the aircraft carrier INS *Vikramaditya*, the refurbished and converted Soviet-era *Admiral Gorshkov*, whose final price approached $3 billion, nearly twice the original estimate. The safety record of Soviet systems has also perturbed India, especially after the explosion that sank the INS *Sindhurakshak* (a 16-year-old Kilo-class Soviet submarine) in 2013, following a previous, though much less serious, mishap in 2010. The supply of spare parts for Russian equipment has also proved unreliable. The back-and-forth recriminations over such problems coincided with vigorous competition for the Indian arms market from America, Britain, France, and Israel.

Still, it will not be easy for India to transform a military that has relied so heavily on Soviet- or Russian-built armaments. Organizational inertia and the Indian military's familiarity with Soviet/Russian weapons will make replacing Russia as the primary supplier difficult, the more so as Moscow will likely continue offering better prices, though now for hard currency payments. As Table 37.1 shows, India still depends overwhelmingly on Russia for arms imports. Hence an Indian military equipped primarily with non-Russian armaments is a distant prospect and military self-sufficiency more so.

Despite decades of efforts and some significant success—including the 2013 launch of the first indigenously produced ballistic missile nuclear submarine (SSBN), INS *Arihant*, based on Russia's Akula-class counterpart—India trails the world's leading producers in the capacity to manufacture major weapons platforms (such as fighter jets and warships) independently. Its defense industrial complex, overseen by the Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO), still suffers from poor quality control, cost overruns, delays, dependence on foreign parts and technologies, and a poor innovation record (Bitzinger 2012; Chhibber and Dhawan 2013).

Still, it will be hard for Russia to retain the dominant position the Soviet Union had in India's arms market. Yet it needs to so. Arms sales have helped keep hard-pressed Russian defense industries operating and have been essential for sustaining the partnership with India. Furthermore, India's importance as a customer will grow because China, the largest buyer of Russian arms, has made big strides in manufacturing, and exporting, major weapons and will be buying fewer of them in the coming decades (Wong and Clark 2013; Cordesman and Kleiber 2007).

Moscow has responded by signing big agreements with India, such as the $2.9 billion deal concluded during Putin's 2012 visit. Beyond selling arms outright, it continues to provide India opportunities for joint production and licensed manufacturing (something that India now requires as part of arms contracts) (Thornton 2012). The major agreements signed since 2000 with such provisions include the co-development of the T-50 fifth generation stealth fighter jet and the BrahMos hypersonic cruise missile—an advanced version of the BrahMos supersonic model, also co-produced—and the T-90 main battle tanks, of which India will buy 310 and produce another 1,000 under license (RIA Novosti 2011b; Radyuhin 2011; Army-Technology.com 2014; S. Sharma 2012). Likewise, beyond gaining access to Russia's GLONASS satellite navigation system, which has military applications for surveillance and targeting, India has been made a partner in the development of

Table 37.1 India's arms imports, 2000–2012 (Constant 1990 $US million)

Supplier	2000	'01	'02	'03	'04	'05	'06	'07	'08	'09	'10	'11	'12	TOTAL
France	41	22	11	15	148	100	5	9	13	15	17	22	23	440
Germany	168	28	18	12	5	5	15	18	18	42	55	45	8	438
Israel	25	58	71	78	151	176	174	105	37	92	101	117	254	1436
Italy	12	9	9	9	18	15	4	5			12	306	15	413
Kazakhstan	3	3												7
Kyrgyzstan				76			18	18						112
Netherlands	35	21			37	25				10	20	1	1	149
Poland	16	49	20	56	36		218	101						497
Russia	685	1125	1756	2316	1444	651	921	1783	1612	2060	2298	2449	3966	23064
Slovakia		26	26											52
S. Africa		15										4	11	30
UK			18		104	117		164	224	112	120	140	290	1289
Ukraine	20	20	14	77	74							28	59	291
US	1	8	5				74	87	5	2	51	190	139	562
Uzbekistan				252	126					209	209	209		1005
Total	**1008**	**1384**	**1946**	**2891**	**2142**	**1088**	**1428**	**2288**	**1908**	**2542**	**2883**	**3511**	**4764**	**29784**

Source: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Arms Transfer Database, <http://portal.sipri.org/publications/pages/transfer/tiv-data>.

upgrades. Still, in 2011–12 Russia lost to American and European competitors for contracts totaling $20 billion. The big-ticket items included fighter jets (the French Rafale was chosen over the MiG-35), combat helicopters (the Mi-28NE lost to the American-made Apache AH-64D), transport helicopters (America's Chinook CH-47F bested the Mi-26 T2), and aerial refueling tankers (Airbus's A330 MRTT prevailed over the Il-78MK-190) (Tkachenko 2013).

Economics

The weak link in the relationship is trade and investment, due in part to the changing structure of the two countries' economies. When India was wedded to an import substitution model—featuring a protected market, central planning, and the creation of a state-owned industrial sector—Soviet aid, and to a degree the USSR's model of development, had a special significance. But since the economic reforms initiated in the early 1990s, India has pushed privatization, greater leeway for market forces, trade liberalization, and foreign investment as means for promoting rapid economic growth and technical innovation. While the pace and magnitude of change should not be overstated, the new orientation is undeniable. Russia contributes little to India's current priorities and needs in comparison to what America, Europe, Japan, South Korea, and Singapore do. Whether it is technology transfer, foreign direct investment, managerial expertise, or services, the West and the Asia-Pacific are the prime sources. Russia, meanwhile, became a petro-state. Hydrocarbon production and exports account for

Table 37.2 India's top ten sources for imports ($US billion)

Country	April 2012–September 2013	Percentage of total
China	28.0	11.9
United Arab Emirates	19.6	8.4
Saudi Arabia	16.1	6.9
United States	12.2	5.2
Switzerland	10.8	4.6
Iraq	9.8	4.2
Qatar	8.1	3.5
Kuwait	8.1	3.5
Germany	7.1	3.0
Indonesia	6.9	3.0
Total	**126.8**	**54**

Source: Government of India, Ministry of Commerce and Trade, http://commerce.nic.in/eidb/iecnttopn.asp.

half of all budget revenues and nearly two-thirds of exports (other raw materials and arms sales account for much of the remainder). The rest of its economy trails the global trendsetters.

These changes threaten to erode the economic element of the Russia–India relationship. Consider the trends in bilateral trade. Between April 2011 and March 2012, Russia ranked 37th in importance for Indian exports, accounting for $1.8 billion or 0.58 per cent of total earnings, which totaled $300 billion. It ranked 30th in imports, the value of which was $4.6 billion, or 0.95 per cent of India's total ($487 billion) (Infodrive India 2014). And Russia's top export markets in 2011 were the Netherlands, Italy, Germany, Ukraine, Turkey, China, Belarus, Poland, France, and the United States. For imports, the lineup was China, Germany, Ukraine, the United States, Belarus, Japan, Italy, France, South Korea, and Poland. Russia's trade with the EU in 2012 totaled $300 billion, with China $75 billion, with Belarus $25 billion, with Japan $20 billion, with the US $19 billion, and with South Korea $17 billion (TopForeignStocks.com, 2014). India–Russia trade by contrast amounted to $11 billion, and the frequently voiced commitment of Indian and Russian leaders to increase it to $20 billion by 2015 appears unrealistic (Dikshit 2013).

Long-term trends also underscore the diminished value of Russia as a trade partner for India. Trade increased 15 per cent between 2005 and 2010 but averaged only $3.9 billion annually; this contrasted with an average of $33 billion in Sino-Indian trade (which increased by 25 per cent) and $35 billion in India–US trade (which increased by 8 per cent) (Tsan 2012: 162). As Tables 37.2 and 37.3 show, Russia is not among the top ten for India's imports and exports, which in each category together account for over half the total. As Figures 37.1 and 37.2 show, the problem is not the failure of bilateral trade to grow but Russia's relative decline in Indian trade.

Table 37.3 India's top ten exports markets ($US billion)

Country	April 2012–September 2013	Percentage of total
United States	19.7	13.8
United Arab Emirates	18.6	13.1
Singapore	6.7	4.7
China	6.4	4.5
Hong Kong	6.2	4.3
Saudi Arabia	4.6	3.3
The Netherlands	4.5	3.1
United Kingdom	4.1	2.9
Germany	3.5	2.5
Brazil	3.0	2.1
TOTAL	**77**	**54**

Source: Government of India, Ministry of Commerce and Trade, http://commerce.nic.in/eidb/iecnttopn.asp.

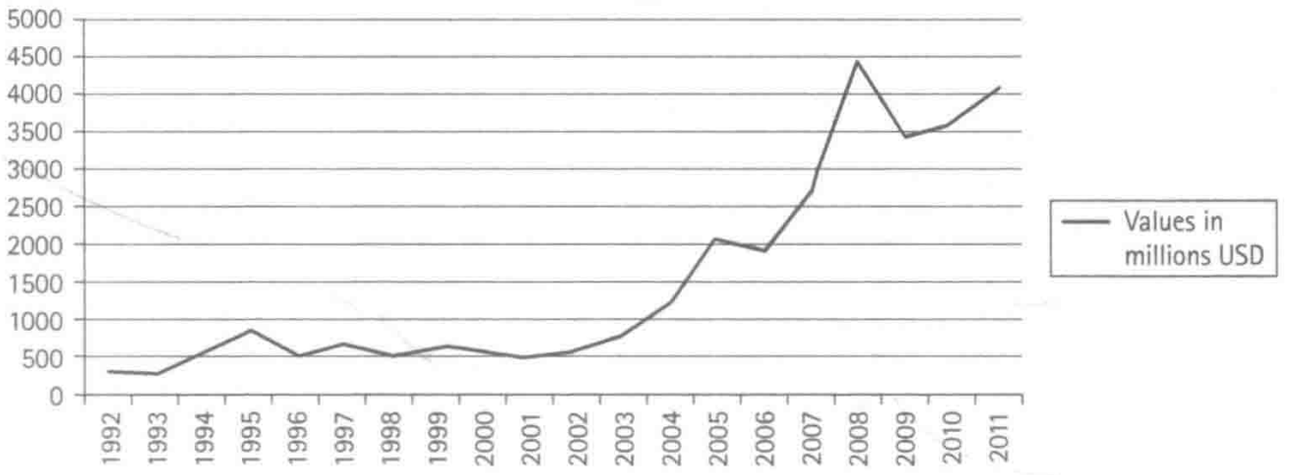

FIGURE 37.1 India imports from Russia.

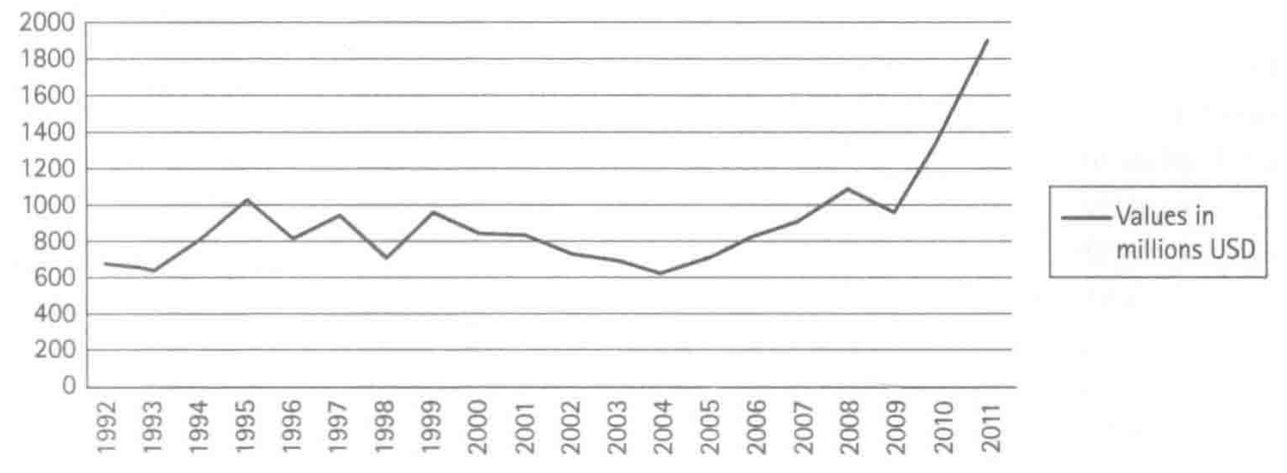

FIGURE 37.2 India exports to Russia.

Source: Generated from the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), STAN Bilateral Trade Database.

Russia is also peripheral for foreign direct investment (FDI) in India. The cumulative total was $100 billion for 2008–13, and it was not among the leading 15 investing countries. The proportional distribution for the top ten, which together accounted for 90 per cent of the total, was: Mauritius (44 per cent), Singapore (9 per cent), the Netherlands (9 per cent) Japan (7.3 per cent), the United States (7 per cent), Britain (6 per cent), France (3 per cent), Germany (3 per cent), Spain (2 per cent), and Switzerland (2 per cent) (Reserve Bank of India 2013).

Energy is the one area in which a natural complementarity exists. India is the world's fourth largest consumer and importer of oil, which accounts for over half the value of its total imports. The gap between its domestic production (900 barrels a day in 2011) and consumption (just under 3,500 barrels) is growing and will increase once the tempo of economic growth, which began to slow in 2012, resumes (US Energy Information Administration 2013). Russia is the world's second largest producer of oil, with an output of 10.2 million barrels a day (b/d) in 2011, of which 7 million b/d were exported.

Yet India is not among the ten most export markets for Russian oil (US Energy Information Administration 2012). Almost 80 per cent of it goes to Europe, and Japan and China account for virtually the entire 16 per cent that heads to Asia (the remainder is sold in North and South America). Likewise, Russia is the world's second largest producer of natural gas and while India's gas production and consumption were matched as late as 2003, the gap has been growing since, with consumption increasing by an average of 10 per cent annually since 2001. Yet virtually all of Russia's gas exports are piped to Europe, Turkey, or the post-Soviet states, while 99.9 per cent of its liquefied natural gas (LNG) exports are shipped to Japan (which alone takes 69.5 per cent), South Korea (it accounts for another 25.7 per cent), China, Taiwan, and Thailand.

Western countries have sidelined India in Russia's energy sector. But so have the Chinese, a case in point being ONGC Videsh Limited's (OVL) loss in 2013 to the China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) in the bid for a share in Russian gas producer Novatek's Yamal LNG project (Radyuhin 2013). OVL did have some successes. It acquired a 20 per cent in the Sakhalin-1 energy consortium in 2001. And in 2009 it purchased Imperial Energy, which operated several oilfields in the Tomsk region (though at a high price—$2.1 billion—that, together with widespread doubts about additional deposits in the region and Imperial's lackluster production record, had deterred other investors, including Russian oil giant Rosneft) (Ivanov 2009). OVL also negotiated, albeit unsuccessfully, with Bashneft, owner of the Trebs and Titov oilfields, for a 20–5 per cent stake in the company; with Gazprom for share-based participation in developing the Kirinsky gas field, part of the Sakhalin III project; and with Rosneft for equity-based participation in tapping the Yurubchenko-Tokhomskoye gas deposits and a stake in one of Rosneft's three Arctic joint multinational consortiums (RIA Novosti 2010, 2011a; RT.com 2012). OVL is nevertheless a minor player in Russia's oil market and will remain so.

One can point to barriers that inhibit the growth of trade and investment between India and Russia (cumbersome regulations on both sides, Russia's restrictive visa regime, the slowness in establishing banks in each other's countries, and India's

expensive liability law for foreign companies hoping to building nuclear reactors in the Indian market). One also can point to advances, among them Russia's commitment to add two additional units to the Kudankulam nuclear reactor complex as part of a 2010 agreement to build as many as 18 across India, and Russian supplies of technology and fuel for India's reactors. Still, it is undeniable that other countries are surpassing Russia in establishing an economic presence in India—even China, which ranks among its top trade partners. The situation could change if, for instance, the North–South trade corridor connecting Europe to South Asia via Central Asia becomes a reality, Indian energy firms win big contracts in Russia, or the Russian economy's structure changes, enabling more complementarities. But none of these is likely within the next several years.

Prospects

The India–Russia relationship is a time tested one that both parties have substantial reasons to preserve. They also have convergent views on important global issues and no disputes that portend crises, let alone conflicts, between them. Yet military transactions will define the relationship even more than in the past, and even in that realm India will have more choices. The economic relationship is eroding, and the pace will accelerate, not just because of India's increasing trade with the United States, Europe, and China, but also on account of its plan to boost trade with the ASEAN economies from $76 billion in 2013, which is about ten times that of India's trade with Russia, to $100 billion by 2015 (Economist 2013). While talk of a New Delhi–Washington alliance is far-fetched, India will expand ties with the United States, partly to balance China, its principal adversary. It will also increase security cooperation with the Asia-Pacific states that also view an ascendant China with trepidation, particularly Japan, Vietnam, Indonesia (with which it signed a 'strategic partnership' agreement in September 2005), and Australia (Holmes 2013; Koga and Joshi 2013; Thayer 2013; R. Sharma 2013; US Department of Defense 2011). Russia's alignment with China may be tactical, but as long as it endures, states more apprehensive about China's growing power than Russia is will gain in strategic significance for India. India's 'Look East' policy, an evident attempt to counter China's economic and military influence in East Asia, has yet to acquire direction and substance, but together with India's expansion of strategic ties with the United States, it will also reduce Russia's strategic significance, certainly relative to the Cold War. What the India–Russia relationship will lack in the coming decades, then, is not stability but versatility and dynamism.

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CHAPTER 38

BRAZIL

Fellow Traveler on the Long and Winding Road to Grandeza

VARUN SAHNI

It is not easy to find a suitable yardstick by which to assess India's expanding relations with Brazil. These relations stand out not just in terms of India's cardinal bilateral relations today but also when assessed in a more global and historical context. Until very recently, Brazil and India shared neither time nor space: separated by three oceans and two hemispheres, the only history that they had in common was the fortuitous outcome of intrepid voyages by Portuguese navigators in their caravels five centuries ago. As important outposts of the Portuguese empire, Brazil and Goa exchanged flora[1] and fauna[2] and influenced each other culturally from the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries. Nevertheless, although Brazil is one of the world's largest immigrant nations, the only major part of the world from which it has not received any significant immigration is the Indian subcontinent. As large but marginal players in world politics, their mutual relations were historically mediated by trends, developments, imperatives, and decisions of the global core. Thus, for example, although this is now largely forgotten, they were allies during the Second World War.

Brazil is one of the few countries in the world with which India can be sensibly compared. Like India, it is a developing country of continental dimensions containing sectors of advanced technology amidst considerable socio-economic deprivation. It is politically stable, secular, ethno-culturally diverse, and ecologically mega-diverse, all attributes that it shares with India. A large federal democracy as well as a trillion-dollar economy, Brazil is—like India—an important player in its region. Both countries have long had a sense of impending 'greatness' or *grandeza*, as many Brazilians characterize it. Yet it is only since the early 2000s that Brazil and India have found themselves to be simultaneously emerging as states with system-shaping potential and intentions, states that furthermore can find some very good reasons to make common cause across a wide range of issue-areas. While their interstate interaction is getting thicker with each

passing year, it is still, in societal terms (despite the profusion of Brazilian soccer jerseys on the torsos of Kolkata's fans during the FIFA World Cup 2014), wafer thin. As Mónica Hirst has aptly pointed out, the two countries are still in the 'getting to know you' phase (Hirst 2008: 143).

There are three very distinct ways in which India's relations with Brazil could be analyzed. The first would be to view these relations regionally, i.e. to locate India's Brazil policy within a broader analysis of India's relations with Latin America. The second would be to view the policy in conventional, bilateral terms by focusing on such factors as high-level visits and trade relations. Thirdly, India's policy towards Brazil could be viewed conceptually, as involving the analysis of relations between two emerging powers that are in the process of building a robust partnership across a multiplicity of issue-areas: a partnership that would necessarily impinge upon the dual contemporary dynamics of power transition and system transformation. In this chapter, each of these lines of inquiry is sequentially pursued. In the next section, India–Brazil relations are analyzed in the historical context of India's relations with Latin America. In the third section, India's current bilateral links with Brazil across a wide spectrum are explored. The fourth section focuses upon the evolution of India's partnership with Brazil as two emerging powers that are simultaneously engaged in capability enhancement and systemic change. The final section concludes the chapter.

The Latin Quarter, the Empty Quarter

Latin America has featured only sporadically, and largely symbolically, in the history of India's foreign policy. Although there is enormous diversity among the 20 countries of Hispanic America and Brazil, it is nevertheless possible—due to the paucity and thinness of interaction—to generalize about India's relations with them. Three historical phases are readily discerned: distant acquaintance (late 1940s to early 1960s), rhetorical solidarity (the mid-1960s to the mid-1990s), and strategic engagement (mid-1990s onwards) (Sahni forthcoming). During the first two phases of its relations with Latin America (1947–64, 1964–98), India's policies towards individual countries in the region did not show significant variation. Interestingly, the one exception was Brazil, which even in the years of distant acquaintance played an important role, both before (negative) and after (positive) India's liberation of Goa from 451 years of Portuguese colonial rule.

This section will focus on the first two phases of India's relations with a continent largely marginalized in India's worldview. In the most recent phase, Brazil clearly stands out as India's principal partner in the region: as emerging powers, both countries have collaborated in a variety of different forums. Brazil's lynchpin role is the most significant feature of the third phase of India–Latin America relations and will therefore be the subject matter of the penultimate section of the chapter.

Although Argentina had established a consulate in Calcutta in the 1920s, and India had opened a trade commission in Buenos Aires in 1943, India's relations with Latin America truly began only after India's independence in 1947. Mexico was the first Latin American country to recognize India after independence, although the two countries did not establish diplomatic relations till 1950. India opened its embassy in Rio de Janeiro in 1948 (later shifting it to Brasilia in 1971); the Brazilian embassy started functioning in New Delhi in 1949. India converted its trade commission in Buenos Aires into an embassy in 1949 and Argentina transferred its consulate to New Delhi as an embassy in 1950. Thus, by 1950, the three largest countries in Latin America had embassies in New Delhi (Sahni forthcoming).

Nevertheless, Latin America was not germane to any of India's external or internal concerns during the first two decades of independence. While Latin America was neglected in Indian foreign policy, Asian concord and African decolonization were significant areas of foreign policy focus. The Commonwealth was a central pillar of foreign policy concern, as were the two superpowers. India had historical links with the region lying between Egypt and Afghanistan, as it did with large parts of eastern and southern Africa. However, south of the United States and Canada, the only part of the Western hemisphere with which India had historically had any contacts were the islands and territories of the Anglophone and Dutch Caribbean, containing the numerically small yet historically significant Indo-Caribbean diaspora. So although Indian foreign policy during the first two decades ranged far and beyond the immediate regional neighborhood and presumed to reshape the world, Latin America, or more specifically Ibero-America, simply did not have a place in it (Sahni forthcoming). Moreover, the benign neglect went both ways: India did not feature in the foreign policies of Latin American countries either. Even after the Cuban Revolution of 1959 and well into the 1960s, Latin America remained firmly in the Western sphere of influence due to both external (the historic US dominance over Latin America) and internal (the pro-Western and anti-communist sentiments of Latin American elites) reasons. The core issues driving the new nations of Asia and Africa—decolonization, non-alignment, and racial equality—had little traction within Latin America (Sahni 1991).

The year 1964 is an important one in India's relations with the countries of Latin America, although not for any bilateral reasons. Instead, 1964 is the year in which countries of the developing world began to challenge the contours of the international system itself. Two significant systemic developments in 1964 were the establishment of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) as a permanent intergovernmental body under the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) to deal with trade, investment, and development issues, and the setting up of the Group of 77 (G-77) as a caucus organization of developing states to pursue common goals and develop leverage in UN deliberations. 1964 marks the beginning of a process of fundamental systemic reorientation, in which the centrality of the East–West political, ideological, and military cleavages of the Cold War were gradually replaced by a North–South dichotomy drawn principally on economic and developmental lines. Since many Latin American countries were enthusiastic participants in both UNCTAD

and the G-77, India discovered for the first time an identity of interests with them (Sahni forthcoming). Important arenas in which Indian diplomats found themselves on the same side as diplomats from Latin America included the Third UN Conference on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS III) during 1973–82 and the formulation and promotion of the New International Economic Order (NIEO) in 1974. Latin American involvement in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) also increased from the presence of just Cuba and three Commonwealth Caribbean observers at Belgrade in 1961 to the participation of 15 Latin American and Caribbean states at New Delhi in 1983 along with eight observer states from the region (Sahni 1991). Latin American theories of dependency had a significant intellectual impact in India and indeed across much of the Third World; Raúl Prebisch, the iconic dependency theorist, became the first secretary-general of UNCTAD (1963–9).

The rise of *tercermundismo* (third world-ism) in Latin America led many countries in Latin America, in different ways and at different paces, to build ties with important countries in Asia and Africa like India. Nevertheless, *tercermundismo* was usually a means of improving a Latin American country's position *within* the West and only rarely reflected a fundamental challenge to Western values and interests (Sahni 1991). Latin American interest and support for Third World initiatives continued to be based primarily on economic issues, with the region's relatively high income levels and resource abundance often complicating the formation of a unified negotiating position with poorer countries in Asia and Africa. The Third World movement proved useless in dealing with the external debt crisis, which was the single most pressing international problem facing Latin America in the 1980s (Sahni 1991).

Thus, while on the face of it there was an exponential growth in India's relations with Latin America during the years of rhetorical solidarity, the overall quality of these relationships remained superficial. Well into the 1990s, the Latin Quarter was the Empty Quarter in Indian foreign policy: the handful of Indian diplomats who chose to specialize on the region tended to do so in the full awareness that they were confining their career to the backwaters. As we will see in the following section, India's relations with Brazil were an exception to this broad trend, albeit for largely negative reasons.

Evolution of a Political Peer Relationship

Although direct diplomatic relations between Brazil and India were established in 1948, soon after Indian independence, interaction between the two countries remained extremely low.[3] Until 1960, no more than 20 Indian visas where issued for Brazilians annually, most of them for diplomats (Stuenkel 2010: 2). The only high-level visit from either side in the first two decades of diplomatic relations was Indian Vice President

Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan's 1954 visit to Brazil. The first trade agreement between the two countries was signed as late as 1963.

India's efforts to decolonize Goa and other Portuguese enclaves on the subcontinent led to severe diplomatic tensions with Brazil, which until 1961 supported Portugal in its effort to retain Goa, a stance condemned by the Indian government. After the liberation of Goa in 1961, the use of military force by India to bring about the end of Portugal's *Estado da Índia* was severely criticized as a violation of international law by the Brazilian government, which represented Portuguese interests in India after the rupture in their diplomatic relations. Although both governments tried to reduce the impact of Goa on bilateral relations, the episode complicated ties significantly: while Brazilian newspapers, reflecting public opinion in the country, condemned India's 'war of aggression' that 'mutilated Portugal' (Stuenkel 2010: 2–3), the integration of Goa into Indian territory was immensely popular among all section of Indians, not least Goans themselves.

Even after 1961, Goa remained an issue in India–Brazil relations. Portugal propped up a number of organizations in Brazil such as the Movement for the Liberation of Goa, the Goa Freedom Movement, and the Movement of Resistance of Goans (MORG), all based in Rio de Janeiro (MEA 1964; Xavier 2013).[4] The Indian foreign office had to work hard to monitor and counter Portugal's propaganda machine that used Goans in Brazil as proxies. A particularly delicate moment was when Portugal accused India in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) of 'religious persecution of Catholics', an accusation that was obviously meant to inflame Goan and Christian opinion worldwide on the eve of another decennial exhibition of the body of St. Francis Xavier, the first to be held under Indian rule. In December 1964, India's ambassador in Brazil, Vincent H. Coelho, informed New Delhi that MORG was little more than a handful of Goans financed by Portugal's secret police and proposed that a Goan delegation visit Brazil to counter anti-India propaganda. On January 5, 1965, a Brazilian parliamentary delegation visited Goa to attend the last day of the saint's exhibition, which was a major diplomatic victory for India both in terms of nailing the Portuguese propaganda about the persecution of Catholics as well as having its sovereignty over Goa recognized internationally (Xavier 2013).

During the Cold War these bilateral obstacles were augmented by the subordination of the foreign policies of both countries to the systemic bipolar logic. Indeed, Brazil's closeness to the United States and India's to the Soviet Union is revealed in their almost symmetric record as non-permanent members of the UNSC (Hirst 2008: 155). The second high-level visit between the two countries was by Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1968, two decades after diplomatic relations were established.[5] Until the early 1990s, such New Delhi–Brasilia understandings that did exist were mainly motivated by shared positions in multilateral arenas and coalition building, particularly those dealing with economic matters.

Bilateral relations picked up gradually in the 1990s. From India, Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao visited Brazil for the Earth Summit in 1992 and President K. R. Narayanan paid a state visit in 1998; in between these two visits, President Fernando Henrique Cardoso visited India in 1996, the first Brazilian head of state to do so. The

Cardoso visit was particularly significant; in its wake, New Delhi–Brasilia contacts expanded with concrete results in trade, scientific, and cultural cooperation. In June 2003, Yashwant Sinha, India's external affairs minister, visited Brazil, the first ever visit by an Indian foreign minister to that country. Four months later, the first meeting of the Mixed Bilateral Commission between India and Brazil took place. Besides, the IBSA initiative, which will be discussed in the next section, stimulated the strengthening of bilateral ties.

In Brazil, the relationship took on an increased importance in the foreign policy of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, as a central part of its South–South cooperative agenda. Interstate relations deepened thanks to a continuum of official visits and a diversified agenda of bilateral agreements. During the state visit by President Lula to India in 2004, seven agreements were signed covering topics such as the peaceful uses of outer space and cooperation on space research, visa exemptions for diplomats, tourism, cultural and educational exchange programs, and a Preferential Trade Agreement between Mercosur and India. President Lula visited India three times in two years and became for some time perhaps the most popular foreign leader in India after Nelson Mandela; Lula was awarded two of India's most prestigious honors, the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding for 2006 and the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for 2010.

In September 2006 Prime Minister Manmohan Singh paid the first visit to Brazil by an Indian head of government in 38 years, following that up with two other visits in April 2010 and June 2012. President Pratibha Devisingh Patil paid a state visit to Brazil in 2008, which was reciprocated by President Dilma Rousseff in March 2012. Official interaction has not only been accompanied by intense business contacts but also has had strategic implications for both countries. This has taken several distinct forms. For instance, in space technology Brazil is seeking India's assistance in space applications including mapping of mineral resources, study of weather patterns and topographic changes, and also in the development and launching of micro and mini satellites (MEA 2014).

In September 2003 India initiated an arms purchase relationship with Brazil by signing an agreement to acquire five Legacy executive jets from the Brazilian aircraft manufacturer Embraer for US$161.6 million (PTI 2003; IAF 2014). By August 2012, India's Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO) had successfully collaborated with Embraer to mount the Indian-built Active Electronic Scanned Array (AESA) radar on Embraer 145 aircraft: India is taking delivery of three of these AEWACS (Airborne Early Warning and Control Aircraft) and the possibility of joint export of this system exists (*Economic Times* 2012). Thus, in less than a decade the two countries have moved from a commercial to a collaborative defense manufacturing relationship. Both countries have signaled their aspiration to develop a sustained defense manufacturing relationship, yet a significant impediment exists in transforming the character of the relationship from transactional to strategic: the factors and considerations that impel the two countries to develop and sustain a military industry are markedly different. India's overwhelming preoccupation is security; in the context of a perilous external security environment, it needs to ensure at least a certain degree of self-sufficiency in

arms production. Brazil's primary purpose is to profit from export earnings, although there are some signs that its arms export drive has weakened substantially in recent years (Sahni 2006: 105).

But perhaps the biggest indicator of the qualitative change in bilateral relations is the support that India received from Brazil in the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) in 2008, subsequent to the signing of the historic US–India civil nuclear agreement. India fulfilled four of the five NSG 'factors for participation' but did not (and still does not) fulfill the fourth, which is 'adherence to one or more of the NPT, the Treaties of Pelindaba, Rarotonga, Tlatelolco, Bangkok or an equivalent international nuclear non-proliferation agreement, and full compliance with the obligations of such agreement(s)' (NSG 2014). Despite its constitutional provisions against nuclear weapons and its own renunciation of nuclear weapons bilaterally with Argentina, Brazil was one of the critical countries that voted in favor of making an exception for India in the extraordinary plenary meeting of September 6, 2008 (IAEA 2008).

Economic and Commercial Relations

In a chapter on foreign policy, tracing India's economic and commercial relations with Brazil prior to 1991–2 would not make much sense. In 1991–2 India's trade with Brazil was minuscule: 420.7 million rupees of exports and 4,831.7 million rupees of imports. While bilateral trade skyrocketed after the opening up of the Indian economy, it still remained tiny when compared to the overall trade of the two countries and the trade basket remained confined to primary products and minor manufacturing. By 2005–6, the bilateral trade basket had changed in significant ways, with heavy manufacturing and precision engineering becoming an important component, which in subsequent years has further diversified and moved up the value chain. In 2012 Brazil exported about US$5.6 billion to India while Indian exports to Brazil touched $5 billion (up from US$ 2.2 billion in 2007). In 2013, Indian exports to Brazil increased to US$6.3 billion but its imports from Brazil declined to US$3.1 billion, raising questions of future trade fluctuations and balances. Brazil's share in Indian export market is about 2.6 per cent. whereas Brazil's share in Indian imports is about 1.3 per cent. Two-way investments between India and Brazil have also increased: while Brazilian companies have invested in the automobiles, information technology (IT), mining, energy, biofuels, and footwear sectors in India, Indian companies have invested in the Brazilian IT, pharmaceutical, energy, agri-business, mining, engineering and auto sectors (MEA 2014; Tripathi 2012).

India's most important trading partner in Latin America these days is not Brazil but Venezuela, since India's energy security is significantly dependent on petroleum imports from the latter country. However, Brazil's importance to India does not primarily lie in the economic realm. India's most important bilateral relationship in the region is with Brazil and not Venezuela, a clear indication that it is not transactional but systemic concerns that are now driving India's Latin America policy.

Two Emerging Powers in a Transitioning World

To fully comprehend its contemporary significance and future possibilities, the India–Brazil relationship is best viewed not in bilateral but in systemic terms. From the latter perspective, it is self-evident that both countries are emerging powers. The meaning of the emerging power concept is best arrived at via triangulation from the great power and middle power concepts. Great powers are the states that—at that particular moment in history—have system-shaping capabilities and intentions.[6] While middle powers could be defined on the basis of relative power, specific systemic and/or regional roles, a potential to emerge as future great powers, or just a vague sense of being 'in the middle' geographically, economically, culturally or diplomatically (Holbraad 1984: 67–75), we define middle powers as states that lack the system-shaping capabilities of the great powers, but whose size, resources, location, and role preclude them from being ignored by the great powers. Triangulating from these two definitions, we can define emerging powers as middle powers on the ascendant: states that have the capability and intention to maneuver their way into great power status. In the early 2000s, India and Brazil found that in the eyes of many other countries they now shared the status of emerging power, forcing policy-makers in both countries to start viewing bilateral relations in systemic terms.

With the ending of Cold War rigidities and the initiation of a new wave of multilateralism in the late 1990s, some developing countries began to expend considerable diplomatic effort in building new interstate coalitions (Hirst 2008: 153). In sharp contrast to the ideological Third World agendas of the 1970s, pragmatism was the leitmotif of the new developing country coalitions which were based upon coordinated strategies and joint initiatives to achieve common goals and shared interests. Brazil and India started maintaining a perceptible and conscious 'unity of approach' in multilateral settings (Hirst 2008: 153). New groupings and distinct arenas came up thick and fast in the 2000s; six of the most significant for Brazil and India were the India, Brazil and South Africa Dialogue Forum (IBSA), Group of Twenty (G-20) developing nations, Group of Four (G4) comprising Brazil, Germany, India, and Japan, Group of Eight plus Five (G8+5) in the Heiligendamm Process, Group of Twenty (G20) forum for the governments and central bank governors from 20 of the world's largest advanced and emerging economies, and the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) grouping.

IBSA, G-20 (developing), G4, G8+5, G20 (advanced and emerging), BRICS: is there a method to this madness, a compass to help us navigate though the alphanumeric soup in which India and Brazil seek to exhibit their 'unity of approach'? We could ask the following question: what would motivate Brazil and India, two antipodal, continent-sized states, lacking a history of substantive intercourse and beset with a host of domestic and external problems, to make the diplomatic effort and invest the political capital needed to come together again and again? In international politics, states get together either

to aggregate their power, or to solve common problems, or to build community, or some combination of the three motivations. Can we see any of these motivations in the Brazil–India relationship, especially as it manifests itself at the systemic level?

There are two distinct examples of power aggregation in the India–Brazil relationship. The first is G4, which seeks to acquire for each country a permanent seat in UNSC, the organized institution of global power structure. However, this instance of power aggregation is fundamentally status quo in nature, inasmuch as it seeks seats at a high table that already exists. This puts the G4 gambit in sharp contradistinction to BRICS, an example of power aggregation for essentially revisionist ends: not so much a seat at the existing high table as building an entirely new high table. There is also an apt example of problem solving in the India–Brazil relationship, as epitomized by their shared membership of the G20 advanced and emerging economies and their participation in the G20 project to stabilize and reset the crisis-ridden global capitalist economy. Finally, IBSA presents a fine example of community building, as the two countries team up with South Africa to build ever more diverse and dense networks of mutual cooperation and learn from one another's best practices.

G4: Status Quo Power Aggregation

Of all international organizations, and principal organs thereof, there is none which is more state-centric (indeed, state power-centric) than UNSC. This is by design. As long as ensuring international peace and security—as opposed to socio-economic development and/or global commons concerns—remains the core responsibility of the UN, veto-wielding UNSC permanent seats are a necessity in terms of institutional architecture. The alternative is the likelihood that the UN will one day transgress upon the vital interests of a state that has the capacity to disrupt international peace and security, thereby risking systemic war. Furthermore, while new powers historically emerged out of the crucible of war, contemporary military technology (nuclear deterrence) fortunately makes war between great powers extremely unlikely. Thus, the only marker of systemic power shifts now is formal recognition in international organization.

The G4 initiative brings together two emerging powers (Brazil and India) and two defeated great powers from the last systemic war (Germany and Japan). Although the initiative has not been particularly successful so far, it is unlikely that either Brazil or India will change its political aspirations or diplomatic strategies on the matter of UNSC reform. Indeed, it makes sense for Brazil and India to pursue their UNSC aspirations in the G4 rather than in BRICS, which have *mutually opposed interests* regarding UNSC reform.

Of the P-5 states, three—Russia, France, and the United Kingdom—are clearly in relative decline while the fourth (the United States) is probably at the zenith of its hegemony and will soon enter a stage of relative decline. As the only rising power in the P-5, China will continue to invoke institutional efficiency and insist that no new permanent seats, with or without veto powers, are added to the UNSC. Given the strong candidatures of

Japan and India for permanent veto-wielding UNSC seats, it is evident that China has a compelling geostrategic interest in Asia to maintain its position on UNSC reform into the foreseeable future. China has good reasons to welcome the initiatives of 'Uniting for Consensus' (UfC), the so-called 'Coffee Club' that came into being in the mid-1990s and whose core members—Italy, Spain, Mexico, Argentina, South Korea, Indonesia, and Pakistan—are precisely those middle powers that would have the least interest in seeing Brazil, India, Germany, and Japan acquire a privileged position within the UN system.

BRICS: Revisionist Power Aggregation

On the face of it, the five BRICS countries have a common motive for joining the grouping: it gives them an ability that they individually lack to challenge the current structures of global governance. The decision taken at the Sixth BRICS Summit in Fortaleza in July 2014 to establish the New Development Bank in Shanghai is a strong example of revisionist power aggregation, insofar as it challenges the structure and legitimacy of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). However, at another level each of the BRICS countries has a different motive for getting involved in the grouping:

- For Russia, the decision to host the Yekaterinburg Summit was entirely political, an attempt to break out of the international isolation in which it found itself after the Georgian crisis of August 2008 (Gupta 2010; Lukyanov 2013).
- For a rising power like China, BRICS is an excellent opportunity to challenge the status quo at very low cost to itself. BRICS also allowed China to circumvent the tacit attempt by India to keep it out of IBSA.
- Brazil's diplomacy is particularly adept at dealing with the 'variable geometry' of multiple international coalitions: BRICS is viewed as Brazil's best asset at the global level, since Mercosur, the regional integration organization, no longer provides global leverage, and IBSA has largely symbolic or normative value (Oliveira and Onuki 2012).
- Membership of BRICS bolsters South Africa's self-perception as an active global citizen and a leader in Africa, strengthening its claim to a permanent role in global governance while imparting an important development cooperation dimension of the grouping.
- India's membership of BRICS levels out any supposed proximity to the United States, rekindles old ties with Russia, builds a much-needed bridge to China and, despite New Delhi's marked preference for IBSA, becomes an alternate forum for both routine and high level interaction with Brasília and Pretoria.

Thus, the five BRICS countries are contra-hegemonic and revisionist to different degrees. The faster the pace at which the relative power of the United States declines, the better it would be from the respective perspectives of China, Russia, and Brazil. The

same cannot be said about India, which would be unwilling to swap US global hegemony for Chinese continental hegemony.

G20: Problem Solving

Since 2008, G20 summits have been reasonably successful at dealing effectively with some pressing global problems, especially those relating to the world capitalist economy. The first two summits played a crucial role in preventing a global financial meltdown and worldwide economic depression. The G20 Washington Summit in 2008 came up with a 47-point Action Plan which included reinforcing international cooperation, reforming the international financial institutions (IFIs), and ensuring that the IMF, World Bank, and other multilateral development banks had sufficient resources to continue playing their role in overcoming the crisis. G20 Working Groups were established on IMF Reform, the World Bank, and other multilateral development banks (MDBs). The G20 London Summit in 2009 put forward a comprehensive action plan for recovery and reform with $5 trillion of stimulus and a $1.1 trillion package for the IMF and World Bank.

Contemporary global problems come in three different types, but are often unhelpfully conflated and thereby confused. In the first type are new problems that the world is confronting either for the first time (anthropogenic climate change) or for the first time in a globalized form (epidemics and pandemics). The solutions to these problems necessarily require ingenuity, the ability to think out-of-the-box, and novel approaches. The second type are old problems (world trade, urbanization, energy and resource scarcity) that require new approaches and solutions because the old approaches no longer work; a renewed emphasis on multilateralism can often be helpful in finding new solutions to these problems. The third type consists of old problems with old solutions but new actors; a range of traditional security issues (sea lanes of communication [SLOCs], weapons of mass destruction [WMD] proliferation, terrorism) that are impacted by the ongoing hegemonic decline and power transition are germane in this context (Sahni 2013: 600–4). How effective the G20 will be, both in absolute terms and relative to other global governance structures such as the UN, will depend upon the type of problem of global governance that is being confronted as also upon the kind of role that emerging powers like Brazil and India would be willing to play.

IBSA: Community Building

IBSA, one of the few successful attempts at building a strategic partnership exclusively among developing countries, is said to be the product of 'South Africa's inspiration, Brazil's initiative and India's immediate acceptance' (Hirst 2008: 155). Conversations between Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee of India, President Luis Inacio de Silva of Brazil, and President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa on the sidelines of the G8+5 meeting in Evian in

2008 led to the Brasilia meeting between the foreign ministers of the three countries a few months later. The three countries were major developing democracies, regional powers if not necessarily regional leaders, and emerging powers. The trilateral dialogue forum was 'an attempt to transform coincidental or episodic, inter-state cooperation into a concrete cooperative agenda' (Hirst 2008: 155) in which it has largely been successful. However, IBSA has not been successful in creating an inter-regional agenda: unlike Mercosur or the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) is neither peaceful internally nor cohesive externally, making it impossible for India to present a regional face within IBSA.

It is sometimes suggested that 'IBSA represents less than the sum of its members,' (Hirst 2008: 157) since all three have increasing prominent global profiles. Apart from permanent diplomatic coordination at multilateral forums, IBSA has also given a fillip to bilateral economic and political relations. In its early years, IBSA established a new pattern of trilateral cooperation consisting of regular meetings of 14 joint working groups (agriculture, culture, defense, education, energy, environment, health, human settlements, public administration, revenue administration, science and technology, social development, transport, trade and investment) and six people-to-people's forums (academic, business, editors, local governance, parliamentary and women). The work done within IBSA is fairly low key but intense, and has in slightly over a decade created authentic networks of specialists in key areas of development activity.

That the three IBSA countries are prominent democracies of the Global South has been a central element in their group identity. This factor has special resonance in Brazil and South Africa, both more recently consolidated democracies than India. On August 3, 2011 the IBSA countries even attempted to play a role in managing the Syrian crisis by using their non-permanent membership in the UNSC (and India's presidency) to persuade the Western powers, China, and Russia to agree to a statement calling for the immediate halt to violence in Syria (UNSC 2011; Gowan 2013). Although the initiative failed, it was seen as an attempt by IBSA to differentiate itself from Russia and China. When the democracy factor became an impediment to China joining IBSA, China deftly circumvented IBSA by inviting South Africa to join BRIC during the Sanya Summit in 2011. One view is that BRICS makes IBSA redundant (Taylor 2012): from this perspective, future IBSA summits will take place on the sidelines of BRICS summits before IBSA itself fades into oblivion. The contrary view is that IBSA has already developed dense and multifaceted internal relations and will evolve as a distinct grouping of states, with substantial growth in trade, the evolution of security personality built around maritime cooperation and defense industry, and intense society-to-society linkages.

Conclusion

The world is currently passing through very difficult times, precisely when it is more interconnected than ever before. The few mechanisms that exist for regulating global

flows and networks are not working well. The traditional centers of global dynamism are either in a situation of stasis, or worse, in a state of crisis. Multilateralism is largely dysfunctional, multipolarity as yet a distant prospect. The global distribution of power is getting more diffuse, but it is still mostly power without purpose. A new cluster of states is emerging, but they still lack decision making mass. Further, it is by no means certain that emerging powers like Brazil and India will use their increasing power in service of not only their own interests but also to promote the common good.

What will be the impact of the emerging powers on world politics? Will they lead to a mere power transition, i.e. will it simply be one more case in history of power being transferred from one set of states to another? Or will the emergence of a new set of great powers, this time around, transform the nature of the international system itself? It will perhaps not be a case of either power transition *or* systemic transformation, but rather *both*. However, both power transition and systemic transformation will most probably be imperfect processes.

The journey upon which Brazil and India are currently embarked as fellow travelers is truly unprecedented. No conventional metric could possibly capture the quality and promise of the relationship; while ifs and buts abound, they will undoubtedly be set aside for now, as both countries revel in the excitement of 'getting to know you'. The real tests will come later, when Brazil emerges as the first great power of the Southern hemisphere, when India successfully negotiates its domestic debilities and regional relationships, and when both countries, through their acts of omission and commission, begin to shape their continents and the world.

Notes

1. Coconut and mango reached Brazil from India, while cashew traveled the other way (Stuenkel 2010: 2).
2. The bulk of Brazilian cattle livestock (over 80 per cent) is of Indian origin, known locally as 'Nelore' after the district in Andhra Pradesh from where the original Ongole (*Bos indicus*) cattle originated (Oklahoma State University 2014); Brazil regularly imports fresh embryos from India to rejuvenate the breed (MEA 2014).
3. The renowned Brazilian poet Cecília Meireles visited New Delhi in 1953 to participate in a seminar organized by UNESCO 'to discuss Gandhi's "outlooks and techniques" as a creative means to resolve Cold War nuclear tensions'. On this, see Peña (2012). I thank Constantino Xavier for suggesting this discursive note.
4. I am grateful to Constantino Xavier for bringing this file in the National Archives, New Delhi to my attention.
5. Although 'none of the accords signed by Indira Gandhi in Brazil were ever implemented', the real significance of the visit was to signal to Brazil that 'India was ready to move on after Brazil had staunchly supported Portugal in its efforts to hold on to Goa' (Stuenkel 2010: 3).
6. Most definitions of great powers focus upon their security profiles and roles, a focus that our definition seeks to avoid. The classic definition of great powers can be found in Levy (1983: 8–18).

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CHAPTER 39

ISRAEL

A Maturing Relationship

P. R. KUMARASWAMY

DESPITE the normalization of relations between the two countries in 1992, Israel continues to draw considerable attention in India. India's traditional support for the Palestinians in the prolonged Arab–Israeli conflict offers only a partial explanation for this trend. Vehement public displays of criticisms and opposition to various policies of Israel are accompanied by considerable interest in Israeli expertise in a host of fields. The intellectual curiosity exhibited during the pre-normalization phase has been complemented by efforts to broaden the support base of the bilateral relations through tangible economic cooperation between the two countries. Despite its relative smallness and largely fledgling trajectory, Israel has occupied a prominent position in Indian foreign policy discourse both before and after normalization of relations.

The establishment of full diplomatic relations with Israel in January 1992 was, arguably, one of India's most significant foreign policy responses to the end of the Cold War (Kumaraswamy 2010a). Though bloc politics of the Euro-centric Cold War were not responsible for the prolonged absence of formal relations between the two countries, bipolarity provided the context within which India's Israel policy operated. The global structural change enabled India to revisit its four-decades-old policy of recognition-without-normalization vis-à-vis the Jewish state (Kumaraswamy 1995). Normalization enabled India to signal a departure from its Cold War approach to international politics. As Prime Minister, P. V. Narasimha Rao was willing to break from the Nehruvian policy even while reiterating the traditional Indian mantra of continuity and change. Structural changes in the international order were accompanied by certain favourable trends in the Middle East; both enabled India to complete the process of normalization that began on 17 September 1950 when Jawaharlal Nehru recognized the newly-born state of Israel.

Unsympathetic History

For the first four decades of their independence, even as Israel was keen on establishing full diplomatic relations, India remained hesitant. New Delhi's prolonged hesitation underscores the dominance of political concerns in bilateral relations, which could be traced to the early 1920s when the Indian nationalists made a common cause with their Arab counterparts in fighting imperialism and colonialism. The undercurrents of decolonization, nationalist struggle against the British, and political rivalry with the Muslim League resulted in the Indian nationalists adopting an explicitly pro-Arab position regarding the Palestinian question since the final days of the First World War. Writing in his *Harijan* weekly in November 1938, Mahatma Gandhi observed: 'Palestine belongs to the Arabs in the same sense that England belongs to the English and France to the French' (Gandhi 1938: 137). Despite its evident lack of understanding of the complexities of the issue, this statement largely summed up the attitude of the Indian nationalists towards the Palestinian question (Shimoni 1977; Chatterjee 1992; Kumaraswamy 1992). The unsympathetic approach of the Indian nationalists towards the Jewish aspirations for a homeland in Palestine, ironically, was accompanied by a traditional hospitality towards the Jewish people, which dates back to even before the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 AD. Historically anti-Semitism, which accompanied the Jews especially in Christian Europe for centuries, remained alien to Indian culture. The socio-cultural accommodation of the Jewish people and political opposition to the demand for a Jewish homeland in Palestine remained the approach of the Indian nationalists towards the Palestinian question. The insignificant demographic strength of the Jewish people in India—which meant that they carried little political influence—and the political rivalry between the Congress Party and the Muslim League for the support of Indian Muslims further shaped the Indian understanding of Jewish history, struggle, and political aspirations.

This position was formalized in 1947 when India was elected to the 11-member United Nations Special Committee on Palestine to determine the future of Mandate Palestine. Disagreeing with the majority that advocated partition of Palestine, India advocated federal Palestine as the solution to the crisis (Mehrish 1975). Unfortunately for India, this did not find any support even among the Arabs. Indeed, the only occasion when the Jews and Arabs agreed in 1947 was in rejecting the Indian plan. When the UN General Assembly endorsed the partition plan on 29 November 1947, India joined Arab and Islamic countries and voted against the partition of Palestine. A couple of years later, it even opposed Israel's admission into the UN. At the same time, the formation of Israel, its recognition by a number of countries, its acceptance by rival blocs of the Cold War, and its admission into the UN eventually led India to reconsider its position and grant recognition to Israel in September 1950.

During his March 1952 meeting in New Delhi with Walter Eytan, the senior most official in the Israeli foreign ministry, Prime Minister Nehru unequivocally promised normalization of relations (Eytan 1958: 130; Gopal 1979: 70). The initial Indian willingness

to establish normal diplomatic relations with Israel, including a resident mission in Tel Aviv, was hampered by shortage of personnel and budgetary considerations. Gradually, however, a number of reasons and compulsions prevented India from fulfilling Nehru's 1952 commitment to Israel on normalization. Both Indian and foreign scholars hold prominent leader of the Congress Party and Nehru's colleague, Maulana Azad, responsible for the absence of relations with Israel (Brecher 1959: 571–2; Gopal 1979: 70). According to them, Azad cited Pakistan's potential diplomatic moves in the Arab world and sentiments of the Indian Muslim population as the reasons to defer normalization.

The Suez crisis of 1956, which witnessed Israeli collaboration with former imperial powers, namely, Britain and France, formally ended the prospects of normalization (Lok Sabha 1956: 595). Since then 'the time is not ripe' for normalization became the standard Indian position regarding Israel and the absence of relations became the principal instrument through which India sought to further its interests in the Middle East. Periodic upsurges of violence in the region and competition with Pakistan resulted in India playing a leading role in a number of anti-Israeli resolutions in international forums such as the United Nations and the Non-Aligned Movement. India's activist approach reached its fullest extent in November 1975 when it voted for the controversial resolution in the UNGA that equated Zionism with racism (Lewis 1976). The limited Israeli diplomatic presence in India came to an end in June 1982 when India declared Consul General Yosef Hassin *persona non-grata* over a controversial media interview (Kumaraswamy 2007). Lacking any ideological baggage, upon assuming office Rajiv Gandhi was favourably disposed towards a re-examination of the Israel file and was prepared to engage with the friends of Israel in the United States and he even hosted a couple of Jewish delegations which focused on the question of normalization. The progress, however, was minimal. Thus, it became obvious that only far-reaching changes in the international system would bring about a change in India's non-relations policy towards Israel and this came when the ideological barriers were brought down at the end of the Cold War.

Normalization and After

Following the normalization of relations, there have been a number of political visits, official exchanges, and several semi-official and private interactions between the two countries. A genuine domestic consensus regarding normalization is evident and even those who criticize Israel's policies rarely advocate a reversal to the pre-1992 position. For its part, India has avoided a high-profile political approach towards Israel and hence its political dealings have been asymmetrical. While Israeli officials have been eager to visit New Delhi, the latter has been cautious in reciprocating. Some of the notable visits from Israel include President Ezer Weizmann (December–January 1997), Shimon Peres (May 1993, August 2000, January 2001, January 2002), Prime Minister Ariel Sharon (September 2003), and Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom (February 2004). From India

Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh (2000), Home Minister L. K. Advani (2000) and Foreign Minister S. M. Krishna (January 2012) visited Israel. Because of political complications, planned bilateral visits by Defence Ministers George Fernandes, Pranab Mukherjee, as well as Ehud Barak did not materialize and the same was true for the reciprocal visit of the Indian President to Israel which is still pending. However, both before and after his tenure as Indian President, renowned scientist A. P. J. Abdul Kalam visited Israel.

There has been a quantum jump in the extent of bilateral economic relations: Israel has emerged as India's major trading partner in the Middle East. In 1990, bilateral trade stood at under US$100 million but crossed the billion dollar mark before the end of the decade. It stood at over US$5 billion in 2010. At the same time, it is essential to recognize that economic ties are dominated by the diamonds trade, namely import of raw diamonds and precious stones from Israel and their re-export as finished products. There are a growing number of joint ventures in fields such as agriculture, irrigation, science and technology, and medicine. As part of the diversification of the portfolio, there are growing Israeli interests and involvement in infrastructure projects in India. Both countries are working for a free trade agreement (FTA) that would provide impetus to the economic relations.

A substantial convergence of interests between the two countries happens in the military-security arena (Inbar and Ningthoujam 2012; Kumaraswamy 1998). At the end of the Cold War, India's defence establishment faced a number of problems, primarily due to the sudden disappearance of the USSR, its principal arms supplier.[1] This was also the period when there was heightened cross-border terrorism emanating from Pakistan. Normalization of relations enabled India to meet some of these challenges. Some of the notable areas of Indo-Israeli security-related cooperation include: counter-terrorism, border management, upgrading of Soviet inventories, surveillance, small arms and ammunition, missile defence, and early warning systems. Even though it does not export costly platforms such as aircraft, ships, or tanks, by 2009 Israel had emerged as the second largest arms supplier to India after Russia. The 26 November 2008 terror attacks in Mumbai were also aimed at Israeli Jewish targets and exposed the vulnerability of democratic countries to religious fanaticism and extremism. For its part, Israel is benefiting not only from the Indian appetite for defence modernization but also from its advancements in satellites. In February 2008, India successfully launched an Israeli satellite into orbit. The Indian decision came amidst speculations that the satellite in question could be useful in case of an Israeli military strike against Iranian nuclear installations.

Three Phases

The end of the Cold War was accompanied by two parallel developments. The Middle East Peace Conference, which began in Madrid on 30 October 1991, signalled the Arab and Palestinian willingness to seek a political solution to the Arab–Israeli conflict through negotiations. By its very nature, political solutions imply readiness of all

parties to abandon their maximalist positions and adopt a give-and-take approach. As the most prominent political development since the end of the Cold War, every major power, including India, wanted to be involved in the ongoing peace process. Far more importantly, the inept handling of the crisis following the Iraqi invasion, occupation, and annexation of Kuwait significantly undermined the fortunes of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and its leader Yasser Arafat. This had considerably weakened political and diplomatic support enjoyed by the PLO among the oil-rich Arab countries, especially Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. As a result, India could no longer hope to further its interests in the Middle East by harping on its non-relations with Israel and pro-Palestinian credentials. It was in this wider context that India reversed its position on Israel.

Until normalization, the bilateral relations were based on a zero-sum approach whereby India perceived non-relations with Israel as the *raison d'être* for its pro-Arab Middle East policy. Even a modicum of relations—which India maintained with China and Pakistan despite hostilities and wars—was seen as dilution of its support for and commitment to the Palestinians. During this phase, New Delhi was in the forefront of many anti-Israel resolutions and moves in various international forums.

Seen within this context, the January 1992 decision to establish full diplomatic relations and resident missions in Tel Aviv and New Delhi marked the second phase. The Madrid conference and the willingness of the mainstream Palestinians led by Arafat to seek a negotiated settlement with the Jewish state forced India to rethink its traditional view of the Middle East. For the first time in its history, India began viewing relations with Israel and the Palestinians as parallel and not exclusive processes. Normalization also implied recognition of the fact that it was possible and necessary to maintain formal relations with both of the warring parties if India were to be relevant in the Middle East peace process.

In the initial years, India was trying to balance its relations with both sides without diluting its traditional policy towards the Palestinians. Indeed, normalization of relations has not led to any modification of its erstwhile position on some of the core issues of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict like realization of the political rights of the Palestinians through statehood, Israeli withdrawal from the territories occupied following the June 1967 war, and opposition to Jewish settlements in the occupied territories. As Israel often complains, India's voting pattern in the UN and other international forums has not changed since 1992.

At the same time, noticeable differences have come about. Since 1992, India has exhibited more balance when responding to frequent bouts of violence in the Middle East. Departing from its erstwhile stand of squarely blaming Israel for all ills and violence in the region, it has been more understanding of Israel's security concerns and accommodative of its interests. Its initial response to the events leading up to the Second Lebanon War of 2006 was balanced and India was critical of the kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers by Hezbollah.[2] Regarding the security fence that Israel had unilaterally erected, it was principally concerned with and critical of its location more than the idea of separation. Indeed, despite intense pressures from Arafat and widespread demands from the Arab

and Islamic countries, in August 2001 India refused to endorse the resurrection of the 'Zionism is racism' debate during the Durban conference against racism.

The third phase of Indo-Israeli relations coincided with the Congress Party returning to power in 2004 as the leading constituent of the UPA. This was also the period when the left parties were seeking a 'course correction' in India's Israel policy. This was an antithesis of the first phase and different from the second phase. During the first phase that lasted until 1992, differences with Israel over the Palestinian issue prevented India from establishing even formal ties with the Jewish state. During the third phase, however, India has been pursuing a more complex approach towards Israel. At one level, it had delinked the bilateral relations from the peace process. It is pursuing and strengthening the bilateral relations even when it has serious differences with Israel over issues such as the Jerusalem question, settlements, refugees, borders, and Palestinian statehood. During the first phase, these differences inhibited India even from engaging with Israel. In the second phase, India was trying to balance its relations with Israel and the Palestinians. Since 2004, New Delhi has been trying to balance the converging bilateral relations with differences over the peace process.

The delinking of the bilateral relations from the peace process has served a dual objective. Through its opposition to Israel over the peace process, India has managed to maintain its traditional goodwill and support among the Palestinians and the Arabs at large. This has also enabled the government to retain its support among the traditionally pro-Arab and anti-Israeli domestic constituencies. At another level, this position or non-dilution of its support for the Palestinians has enabled India to pursue intense political and security relations with Israel. As a result, India's continued support for the Palestinians has been accompanied by Israel emerging as the second largest supplier of defence equipment to India after Russia. New Delhi's consistent pro-Palestinian voting pattern in the UN was accompanied by India launching an Israeli satellite which has military-security implications. In short, until 1992 political differences prevented India from normalization, but since 2004, political differences over the peace process ironically enabled India to forge closer ties with Israel. This non-parallel approach to bilateral relations could be useful in dealing with other countries, especially the United States and Iran, with whom India has both problems and opportunities.

Patterns

Post-normalization, two distinct features in Indo-Israeli bilateral relations are evident: the extended roles played by ministries and agencies other than the MEA, and the growing importance of state governments in the bilateral relations.

The fascinating and unique aspect of Indo-Israeli relations has been the crucial role played by various state governments of India in furthering the bilateral relations. Their preoccupation with economic issues and a social welfare agenda and their limited involvement in foreign policy issues has enabled many state governments to forge

closer economic ties with Israel. In states like Kerala, which has a large expatriate presence in the Persian Gulf, the Arab–Israeli conflict does play a role, especially during Lok Sabha and state assembly elections as parties compete for the support of the Muslim electorate. This, however, is not true for other states where the development agenda has forced various political parties to seek economic partnerships with Israel. Since the early 1990s, state governments ruled by the Congress, BJP, Janata Dal, and even the left parties have not been averse to economic and investment opportunities from Israel. Even the Congress Party, which at the national level has been averse to engaging Israel wholeheartedly, especially during the tenure of the UPA, adopts a different stand when it comes to states under its rule.

The emergence of states as important players has considerably enhanced the bilateral relations. At one level, this has minimized the political impact of the Arab–Israeli conflict that often dogs bilateral relations at the national level. Unlike the Union government focused with high politics issues, the state governments are primarily concerned with immediate tangible issues such as agriculture, horticulture, irrigation, desertification, water management, desalination, and infrastructure and seek to benefit from Israeli experience and expertise. The state-level cooperation in these areas brings tangible benefits to ordinary people aimed at improving their daily lives. In the process, cooperation with Israel could result in building strong grassroots support and could eventually influence India's overall political attitude towards Israel. For decades, ideological considerations significantly contributed to India's pro-Arab stand. Israel appears to be seeking to counter this through visible economic benefits through its states-level partnerships. There are indications that a few other Western countries have been trying to emulate this model but with limited success.

The second salient feature of the bilateral relations is the increasing role played by professional ministries within the Indian government. The military-security establishment, where professionalism rather than politics plays a key role in decision-making, has emerged as one of the principal drivers of bilateral relations. The significant role played by Israel in India's military imports has professionalized the ties. The need for modernization, technology upgrading, intelligence gathering, and border management are some of the core issues dominating the military-security aspects of the bilateral relations. These issues are handled at professional levels with limited political interference. Political sensitivities that coloured the military dimensions in the early 1990s are slowly receding. Exchange of visits by service chiefs and heads of various branches of the security establishment, including intelligence chiefs, no longer makes headlines in either country. Such visits have become routine even though no National Security Adviser had visited Israel since UPA came to power in 2004.

Another arena where one could notice growing professionalism is agriculture. Different parts of India need and benefit from Israeli expertise in high-yielding crops, farming technology, drip irrigation, and other water management techniques. Because of the states-centric nature of these relations and the support they receive from the Ministry of Agriculture, agricultural cooperation has seen less political interference.

Education is the third major area that has gained prominence in recent years. Partly to further the bilateral relations and partly to blunt the anti-Israeli sentiments among powerful segments of the Indian intelligentsia, both countries are seeking to promote academic cooperation. As part of the process, in August 2012 both countries signed a three-year India–Israel Joint Research Agreement to collaborate in areas of arts, humanities, medicine, and social sciences.

The involvement of the Ministries of Defence and Agriculture and state governments does not eliminate the role of the MEA. Indeed, they continue to require logistical support and nodal approval from the Foreign Office. At the same time, the role of the MEA in setting the pace of the bilateral relations has been diminishing. Its primary role and purpose appears to be pursuing the course of multilateralism and the peace process where both countries agree very little. In areas which have seen progress over the last two decades, namely, military-security, agriculture, and education, the MEA is more facilitator than leader. Its traditional pro-Arab orientation and prolonged influence exercised by the Indian Union Muslim League under UPA rule, inhibits the South Block from taking a leadership role in the bilateral relations. Thus, the limitations of the MEA and operational demands of sectors such as defence and agriculture have largely marginalized the role of professional diplomats in accelerating the bilateral relations. This is one of the ironies of Indo-Israeli relations.

The 1992 decision also dispelled another traditional perception of the domestic Muslim population. There are considerable indications that perceived opposition from Muslim populations prevented Indian leaders, including Jawaharlal Nehru, from establishing full diplomatic relations with Israel. However, in political terms, it is not correct to suggest that opposition to normalization was driven, in part, by perceived opposition of Indian Muslims towards Israel. Even those who attributed the US policy towards the Middle East to the pro-Israeli lobby vehemently denied any tenuous link between domestic Muslim population and anti-Israel policy (Pradhan 2004). When the BJP-led NDA was in power during 1999 and 2004, many attributed India's growing proximity with Israel to the anti-Muslim agenda of the *hindutva* elements (Prashad 2003). Above all, Azad's opposition to normalization in 1952 was also attributed to an apparent domestic Muslim opposition. Indeed, during a talk organized by the Israel Council on Foreign Relations in Jerusalem in July 2004, Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh was candid: 'India's Israel policy became a captive to domestic policy that came to be unwittingly an unstated veto to India's West Asian policy' (quoted in Noorani 2001).

Normalization, however, indicated the hollowness of the argument as open Muslim opposition to Rao's decision was marginal and has been exhibited in subsequent years only during violent upheavals in the Middle East. On the contrary, since 1992 one could notice a perceptible shift in the attitude of the Muslim community towards Israel manifested through Muslim contacts, visits, and meetings with Israeli dignitaries. Though not everyone is happy with normalization of relations, opinion within the Muslim community is no longer monolithic and sections among them are prepared to view Israel differently and engage with it (Kumaraswamy 2010b).

External Influence

The external responses to normalization and subsequent expansion of bilateral relations have been largely favourable. There are at least five external players who have had some influence on the bilateral relations, namely, the United States, Egypt, Pakistan, Iran and China, in that order.

The United States: While other countries have played or been seeking to reduce the pace and composition of the bilateral relations, the United States has been their principal proponent and promoter. Both before and after normalization, Washington has been seeking to influence various Indian governments and leaders to re-examine and modify the traditional reluctance vis-à-vis Israel. Such an approach was apparent during the heydays of Nehru. During one of his visits to the United States, the Indian leader met the Israeli ambassador in Washington and explained the Indian cautiousness towards Israel in terms of the domestic Muslim population. India's delayed recognition in September 1950 could be partly attributed to the US factor. Between 1950 and 1992 there were a number of American efforts aimed at rectifying the anomalous situation of recognition-without-relations. When Rajiv Gandhi was in office, India was actively engaged with important pro-Israeli groups in the United States. The return of an Israeli Consul General in Mumbai in 1989, and the expansion of consular jurisdiction to Kerala were made with the United States in mind. Indeed, the announcement of normalization was also linked to the United States as it came hours before Prime Minister Rao's visit to New York to attend the summit meeting of the UN Security Council. Faulting the US factor, a renowned Middle East expert observed that the establishment of 'full diplomatic relations with Israel was a correct decision ... but to do so under American pressure was unwise' (Agwani 1993: 3).

The positive role played by the United States in furthering Indo-Israeli relations was acknowledged by Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's National Security Adviser Brajesh Mishra. Addressing a dinner hosted by the American Jewish Committee in May 2003, he observed that India, Israel, and the US 'have some fundamental similarities. We are all democracies, sharing a common vision of pluralism, tolerance and equal opportunity. Stronger India–US relations and India–Israel relations have a natural logic' (MEA 2003). This remark became controversial as opponents of Israel interpreted this as a clarion call for an India–Israel–US alliance. Mishra's remarks were merely recognizing ground realities of the need to limit negative vibes in Capitol Hill towards India and a warning against complacency and possible hurdles in developing ties with Israel.

At another level, Mishra's remarks are a reminder of the influence the United States wields over Israel and the need for India to recognize its importance. Through prolonged political support, economic largesse, technology transfers, and military aid and assistance, the United States has acquired considerable influence over Israel and its foreign and security policies. This influence is more apparent in Israel's arms export policy: under American pressure Israel has abandoned a number of lucrative arms deals in

Latin America and other parts of the world. After the Cold War, Washington pressurized and eventually scuttled Israel's military exports to China.

Indeed, when Mishra made his remarks, India was seeking Phalcon advanced airborne early warning systems (AWACs)—the very system whose exports to China was vetoed by the United States—from Israel (Kumaraswamy 2005). Hence, it was essential for India to seek a *modus vivendi* with Washington if it were to avoid falling into the same trap and face a US veto over Israeli arms. Thus, far from a triangular axis, it was a reflection of political realism and insurance policy against any future problems over security cooperation with Israel. Indeed, Israel is one of the very few issues in the Middle East where post-Cold War American policy has been beneficial to India, whereas its policies over Iraq and Iran have only complicated India's ability to pursue friendlier ties with the latter two countries.

Egypt: President Hosni Mubarak's Egypt was a notable critic of normalization. Even though Palestinian leader Arafat was more understanding of India's choice, the Egyptian leader was less accommodative. As part of his efforts to rehabilitate Egypt's image in the Arab world following its peace agreement with Israel, Mubarak has maintained a cold peace with Israel. The end of the Cold War, the Madrid conference, and the Oslo accords did not alter Mubarak's position of Egypt being the sole interlocutor between Israel and the outside world. India's willingness to open the Azad Cultural Centre in Cairo in 1992 and the bestowing of the Jawaharlal Nehru Award of International Peace for 1995 did not ameliorate Egyptian anger over normalization. Indeed, it took Mubarak 13 years to find time to visit New Delhi and accept the highest Indian honour for a foreign dignitary.

Iran: The Islamic Republic of Iran has been pragmatic vis-à-vis Indo-Israeli relations. It was vocal in expressing its disapproval of Rao's decision but did not go beyond that. The upward turn in Indo-Iranian relations coincided with a similar trajectory in Indo-Israeli relations. By the time Rao reversed the policy, Ayatollah Khomeini had died and President Hashemi Rafsanjani was seeking an end to Iranian isolation that followed the Islamic Revolution through political pragmatism and accommodation with Iran's neighbours. Tehran was also looking for friends to end its isolation and was reaching out various countries, including India. Beginning with the visit of Prime Minister Rao to Tehran in September 1993, Indo-Iranian relations flourished and soon Iran emerged as a key to India's political, economic, and, above all, energy interests.

Iran has never raised the issue of Indo-Israel ties while dealing with New Delhi. At the same time, some Iranian polices and political rhetoric, especially during the tenure of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, ran counter to Indian interests: for example, Iranian opposition to the Oslo process and its support for radical elements in the Middle East. Likewise, Holocaust denial and anti-Israel statements also complicated India's ties with the Middle East. For its part, since the early 1990s, Israel flagged Iran in its political ties and strategic interactions with India. During the visit of Sharon in September 2003, Israel raised concerns over possible transfer of Israeli technology to Iran with India.

The terror attack on the wife of an Israeli diplomat in New Delhi in February 2012 brought the growing Israeli–Iranian tensions to the Indian territory. After a long and delayed investigation, four Iranian nationals were charged for the terror attack but

India received little cooperation from the Iranian authorities. While official culpability remains unproved, it appears that rogue Iranian elements were involved in the attack. However, the difficulties facing Indo-Iranian relations are not linked to Israel but are due to greater influence and interference from the United States.

Pakistan: Pakistan has been the most dominant external factor in shaping India's Israel policy but its origins can be traced to the Khilafat struggle of the 1920s. It began as a tussle between the Congress Party and the Muslim League for the support of the Indian Muslims. Indeed, some of the prominent pronouncements of the Congress leaders regarding the Palestine issue could be traced to this competition with the League. After Partition, this competition transformed into the Indo-Pakistan rivalry that played out prominently in the Middle East. According to Indian and foreign scholars, Azad attributed Pakistan as one of the two factors (the other being the sentiments of Indian Muslims) preventing the normalization of relations in 1952. The controversial remark of the Israeli Consular General was not off the mark. Though he was expelled for his observations, he accurately depicted the state of affairs when he said:

> [Indian politicians] are afraid of the Arabs, they are afraid that Iraq will cancel their contracts, Saudi Arabia will stop accepting labourers ... India is always asking for floor at the UN and other international forums to denounce Israel and prove to the Arabs that you are doing more than Pakistan. That way you think you will impress the Arabs. (*The Sunday Observer* 1982)

Prolonged Indian competition with Pakistan for Arab support has resulted in New Delhi adopting a pronouncedly anti-Israeli posture. Such an approach was logical and even inevitable. Limited international leverage, especially after its conflict with China in 1962, and dependence upon foreign economic support led to India seeking to befriend the Arabs through the political route. This was compounded by its growing dependence upon the region for energy supplies. If Pakistan was exhibiting its 'Islamic' credentials, India was using the Palestinian card to befriend the Arabs. The timing of India's decision to normalize relations with Israel also coincided with the diminishing influence of the Palestinian factor in inter-Arab relations. Thus, the Congress–Muslim League rivalry of the nationalist phase was replaced by Indo-Pakistan rivalry that most visibly played out in the Middle East.

The post-Cold War climate witnessed diminishing influence of the role Pakistan played in shaping India's foreign relations. Its newly-found great power aspirations also diluted its obsession with Pakistan, especially when dealing with the Islamic world. This was primarily the result of India's economic ascendance which also brought political relevance and power aspirations. While Pakistan continues to be important, its influence upon India's Middle East policy has considerably diminished since the early 1990s. At one level, this has resulted in India forging closer ties with Israel without its traditional apprehensions over Pakistani 'mischief' in the Middle East. Growing confidence also enabled India to adopt a friendlier position towards any possible diplomatic relations between Israel and Pakistan. Speaking to

reporters in Israel in January 2012, Foreign Minister S. M. Krishna observed: 'I think it is between Israel and Pakistan to decide what kind of relationship they want to establish, as much as it is between Israel and India to decide what kind of relationship we want to establish' (*The Economic Times* 2012). Even suggestions of possible Israeli arms exports to Pakistan did not elicit a strong response from New Delhi. One could notice similar trends in the Israeli attitude towards the bilateral relations. Initially, Pakistan and its support for cross-border terrorism figured prominently in Israeli discourse but gradually Israeli leaders stopped referring to Pakistan or issues pertaining to Pakistan in their dealings with India. The Delhi Declaration issued during the visit of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon in September 2003, for example, had no reference to Kashmir or cross-border terror.

The post-1992 phase also witnessed substantial improvement in India's relations with key Middle Eastern countries. Contrary to suggestions, the growth in Indo-Israeli relations was accompanied by a similar trajectory in India's relations with a number of Islamic countries in the region. Political, economic, and energy interactions between India and the Middle East improved far more after 1992 than at any time in the past. This was primarily due to India's growing economic strength and its emergence as a significant player in the international energy market. Indeed, one could argue that delinking Pakistan from its Middle East policy has enabled India to forge closer ties not only with Israel but also the region's principal players such as Iran and Saudi Arabia.

Conclusion

Prior to 1992, disagreements with Israel regarding the Arab–Israeli conflict prevented India from maintaining even formal relations. Since the turn of the century, India has been pursuing a mature policy that differentiates bilateral benefits from multilateral differences. Without abandoning its core positions concerning contentious issues such as Palestinian statehood, refugees, or borders, India has managed to forge a strong and nuanced relationship with Israel. The long-term stability, sustainability, and progress of this relationship depend upon the ability of both countries to find common ground for cooperation while agreeing to disagree on the disagreeable.

Notes

1. Despite the absence of diplomatic relations, Israel had supplied significant quantities of small arms and ammunition to India during its conflict with China in 1962 and with Pakistan in 1965. These were rarely recognized by India due to prevailing non-reactions.
2. This balance changed, however, when the militant group garnered greater support of the Arab masses; before long India abandoned its nuanced stand and squarely embraced the resistance against Israel.

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CHAPTER 40

INDIA AND SOUTH AFRICA

KUDRAT VIRK

Introduction

By dint of their membership in elite blocs, if nothing else, India and South Africa belong to a cohort of emerging powers that are in the vanguard of a historic shift in influence and wealth from North to South and West to East. Both are maturing democracies facing similar challenges related to socio-economic development and modernization, with a shared history of solidarity against colonialism, imperialism, and racial discrimination, as well as a common commitment to the creation of a more just and democratic world order. Since the end of apartheid in South Africa in 1994, the two countries have also viewed each other as key strategic partners. Although South Africa is dwarfed by India in economic and demographic terms, it is the dominant economic force in Southern Africa, and the most sophisticated economy in Africa with the ability—and, of late, ambition—to play a leadership role in the wider continent and beyond. It is, in other words, 'the African country most widely recognized as a global player' (Sidiropoulos 2011: 2); and one that can, in theory, leverage influence over a resource-rich region of immense significance to India. Notwithstanding their declarations of mutual goodwill and of South–South cooperation, the contemporary story of India–South Africa relations—as this chapter contends—has been increasingly driven by hard-headed economic and strategic imperatives; and has featured divergences on an array of issues including climate change, global governance reform, and intervention.

Historical Bricks-and-Mortar: The Struggle against Racial Discrimination

Independence in India coincided with the official coming of apartheid in South Africa, which forestalled the establishment of formal diplomatic relations between the two

countries for almost 46 years. Yet, the ties that bind contemporary India and South Africa stretch back to the seventeenth-century import of slave labor from Asia by Dutch traders and settlers in the Cape of Good Hope; these early Indians mixed with slaves from other parts of Asia and Africa, as well as European settlers and local Khoisan, becoming fully integrated into the Cape colored communities over time. Today, South Africa is home to a distinct Asian diaspora community that primarily owes its presence to the Indian indentured laborers brought over to work in Natal from 1860 onwards under British colonial rule, and a smaller number of fare-paying emigrants, known as 'passenger' Indians, that followed them (Government of India 2002: 75–8).

During the pre-apartheid period, even as India's own freedom struggle took shape, Gandhi cut a key figure within the Indian community in South Africa between 1893 and 1914 (see Guha 2013). These South African years played a pivotal role in shaping Gandhi's political thought and struggle methods, which in turn had a profound impact on the development of the Indian nationalist movement and the early South African liberation struggle (Brown 1996). From 1885 onwards, Indian communities in South Africa faced growing white settler hostility and became the targets of a spate of discriminatory legislation. Shortly after he arrived in 1893, Gandhi personally encountered the racial prejudice through a series of humiliations, including forced removal from a train at Pietermaritzburg, which became 'the genesis … of his resolve to resist racial injustice in southern Africa and elsewhere by non-violent means' (Guest 1996: 7). In 1894, he helped to establish the Natal Indian Congress, and in 1906–7, launched his first *Satyagraha* (non-violent civil resistance)—an eight-year-long campaign of civil disobedience that inspired the interest of Indian nationalists.

As Judith Brown (1996: 31) argues, 'South Africa in a sense made the Indian Gandhi.' His cross-cutting role and preeminence in the Indian freedom struggle helped to develop and sustain Indian nationalists' attention to the issue of racial discrimination in South Africa, laying the foundations for Afro-Asian solidarity against apartheid; and to inspire activists struggling in South Africa itself. Early South African Indian leaders, including Gandhi, did not make common cause with the local African population. However, in the 1940s, the issue of anti-Indian policies and practices came to be placed within a broader context of racial discrimination, with the emergence of a new generation of leaders in the South African Indian community who were keen on 'the idea of breaking racial boundaries around political struggles' (Vahed 2011: 116). The Three Doctors' Pact of 1947, signed by the leaders of the African National Congress (ANC), the Natal Indian Congress, and the Transvaal Indian Congress, laid the foundation of South Africa's multiracial struggle for racial equality. The jointly-led 1952 Defiance Campaign—a Gandhian civil disobedience campaign against apartheid laws—gave concrete form to this African–Indian cooperation for the first time, while transforming the ANC into a mass-based organization. Furthermore, until the ANC adopted armed struggle in the aftermath of the Sharpeville Massacre of 1960, the anti-apartheid struggle continued to bear a distinctly Gandhian imprint.

While the ANC took over leadership of the liberation struggle in South Africa from the 1950s onwards, the historical link between the South African Indian community and the Indian nationalist movement was crucial to bringing the policy of apartheid to

international attention.[1] In 1946, the Indian government became the first to place a complaint against the South African government's racial policies on the agenda of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly, and to unilaterally impose an embargo on trade with Pretoria. Although this was later expanded to include all forms of racial discrimination, India's initial complaint to the UN addressed only the treatment of Indians. Even so, it was—as Vijay Gupta (2008: 1262) observes—a remarkable act of protest 'by a British colony against a British dominion', compelled by public support in India for the South African Indian community's Passive Resistance Campaign of 1946–8.

After independence in 1947, India was indefatigable in its anti-apartheid activism, which came to be ever more firmly grounded in a broader commitment to anti-colonialism and Afro-Asian solidarity; and in a desire to make its presence felt in the world. Under Jawaharlal Nehru (1947–4), it also expressed a belief in 'the moral purpose of the state' (Reus-Smit 1999) as an agency for the creation of a fairer and more equitable international society (see Virk 2010: 131–3; see also Chacko 2012: 278–82). At the UN, the Indian delegation led debates and pushed resolutions censuring South Africa through the late 1940s and into the 1950s, before ceding this leadership role to the African Group as decolonization gathered pace in Africa in the 1960s.

In 1977, when the UN Security Council imposed mandatory sanctions against the white minority South African government—acting under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter explicitly for the first time in its history—India, as a non-permanent member of the body, argued and voted in favor of the landmark decision. Beyond the UN, India repeatedly raised the issue of apartheid in numerous multilateral forums, including the Commonwealth and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM); and, from the 1960s onwards, supported various demands for concrete sanctions to end white minority rule and racial discrimination in South Africa. Furthermore, New Delhi provided significant material assistance to the ANC, as well as Africa's Frontline States (FLS), both bilaterally and multilaterally through various funds, including the Organization of African Unity's (OAU) Assistance Fund for the Struggle against Colonialism and Apartheid and the UN Educational and Training Programme for South Africa. In 1967, India granted diplomatic status to the ANC, providing it with financial support to open its first Asian mission in New Delhi in 1968.

Contemporary India–South Africa Relations

Since the establishment of formal diplomatic ties, both India and democratic South Africa have sought to emphasize their history of Afro-Asian solidarity as the foundation of their bilateral relationship. Yet, although there is a measure of natural genuineness in these sentiments, the contemporary 'strategic partnership' between New Delhi and Tshwane (Pretoria) has been driven by more concrete strategic and economic imperatives.

Bilateral Engagement: The Ascendancy of Economic Diplomacy

India's bilateral engagement with South Africa is situated within the broader ambit of its Africa policy. New Delhi's ascendancy in the international arena at the turn of the twenty-first century is heavily premised on sustaining its post-Cold War economic growth trajectory and on meeting the development needs of its population of over 1.2 billion. In particular, securing access to energy and natural resources, including through the diversification of sources, has become essential for a country that is already the fourth largest energy consumer in the world. This has been a key driver of New Delhi's resurgent engagement with resource-rich Africa over the past decade (Naidu 2011: 53–4). South Africa holds among the largest reserves of gold, diamonds, manganese, and chromium and platinum-group metals globally; is a major producer and exporter of coal (India's main source of energy); and has a world-class mining industry. Additionally, South Africa in particular and Africa as a whole—with its rising urban middle-class and untapped market potential—has emerged as an important trade and investment destination for India. In the face of competition from China, in particular, but also other emerging powers such as Brazil and Turkey, South Africa is—in theory—an ideal 'gateway' to the continent for India, given their past history of 'South–South cooperation' in the anti-apartheid struggle.

Economic and commercial considerations have been similarly ascendant in South Africa's foreign policy-making over the past decade; and become a key feature of its diplomacy across the board, including India, with an over 200-strong business delegation accompanying President Jacob Zuma (since 2009) on his state visit to the country in 2010. As Chris Landsberg (2010) argues, successive post-apartheid governments have stressed the need for foreign policy to address the negative socio-economic legacies of white-minority rule, including poverty, unemployment, and inequality: with a Gini co-efficient of 0.63 in 2000–10, South Africa is the most unequal society in the world (UNDP 2013: 154). Over the past two decades, the economic development agenda has been steadily moving to the forefront both in Tshwane's regional integration and region-building agenda at the African Union (AU) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC); as well as in its drive to engage 'new' powers, such as India, beyond the continent (CCR 2014: 12). In this context, South Africa's aggressive—and successful—campaign under Zuma to join the BRIC (Brazil–Russia–India–China) bloc formed part of a concerted effort to reduce the country's economic dependence on its traditional partners in the West; and to align South Africa's future with the world's foremost emerging markets (CUTS-CITEE 2005: 2).

Since the lifting of apartheid-era sanctions in 1993, bilateral trade between India and South Africa has grown very rapidly from $2.5 billion in 2003/2004 to $13.2 billion in 2012/2013, and is expected to exceed $15 billion by 2014 (MEA 2013). This places South Africa in second position among India's top African trade partners, behind Nigeria. In particular, India is the world's largest jewelry producer and biggest consumer of gold,

which is the country's top import after crude oil. South Africa is the third largest source of India's gold imports, supplying over 11 per cent of the total (CII and WTO 2013: 25); and an increasingly important source for diamonds, not to forget coal. In 2011, the Metal and Minerals Trading Corporation (MMTC)—India's largest government-owned trading company—opened an office in Johannesburg in an effort to boost imports, cut costs, and facilitate longer-term mineral purchasing contracts, as well as to support the expansion of New Delhi's interests in the wider continent.

Similarly, private investment flows between India and South Africa have grown in the post-apartheid era: 'Overall investment stock of Indian companies in South Africa amounted to US$6 billion in 2010, and South African investment in India was estimated at about US$500 million' (Sidiropoulos 2011: 8). For an India Inc. keen to establish its footprint on the African continent, South Africa offers particular advantages. It is the most competitive and technologically sophisticated economy in sub-Saharan Africa, with one of the world's most well-developed financial markets, making it an especially attractive investment destination and springboard into the wider continent (see Schwab 2012: 13–20). The Tata Group, for example, is one of the biggest investors in South Africa, with Johannesburg serving as headquarters for its continental operations. Other major Indian investors in South Africa include: Mahindra and Ashok Leyland (automobiles); the United Breweries (UB) Group; and Ranbaxy, CIPLA, and Dr. Reddy's Laboratories (pharmaceuticals). Meanwhile, the growing South African corporate presence in India includes: SABMiller (breweries); Old Mutual (insurance); and Airports Company South Africa (ACSA). In an effort to boost this commercial interaction, an India Business Forum (IBF) was launched in 2007 and an India–South Africa CEOs' Forum in 2010 (MEA 2013).

While India's economic and commercial engagement with South Africa has grown rapidly from a low base, a number of factors cloud the picture.[2] First, overall bilateral trade shares are still extremely low. South Africa accounted for a mere 1.8 per cent of India's total trade in 2011, ranking 17th as a trade partner behind the European Union (EU), China, and the United States. Meanwhile, its share of South Africa's total trade comprised only 3.8 per cent in 2012, significantly less than both the EU's 21.3 per cent and China's 12.3 per cent (European Commission 2013). In an effort to stimulate bilateral trade, in 2000, New Delhi and Tshwane agreed to negotiate a preferential trade agreement (PTA), with the agenda expanded in 2002 to include the Southern African Customs Union (SACU). For India, the inclusion of SACU underscores the importance of 'South Africa as a springboard into other African markets' against the backdrop of an African agenda for greater regional integration (CUTS-CITEE 2005: 2). The India–SACU PTA is also part-and-parcel of a larger IBSA (India–Brazil–South Africa) ambition to create a trilateral free trade area linking India, SACU, and MERCOSUR (the Common Market of the South). However, the dynamics of asymmetry within SACU (among other factors) have made the India–SACU PTA negotiations more complex; and an agreement was yet to be concluded in 2014.

Second, there is an imbalance in the trade pattern that has been of particular concern to South Africa: it is heavily weighted in favor of primary product exports from South

Africa and manufactured and/or value-added good imports to South Africa. From Tshwane's perspective, it is difficult to square this pattern with the objective of creating a dynamic, industrialized, and diversified economy. South African government officials have unsurprisingly raised the issue repeatedly during visits from and to India; at the India–South Africa CEOs' Forum; and within the BRICS framework. In this respect, it also speaks to broader anxieties—shared in the wider continent—about a modern-day 'scramble for Africa' by India and its BRIC counterparts. While India may not 'regard Africa simply as a supplier of natural resources' (Vines 2010: 15), there is a need for it to address the actual nature of its trade with South Africa, and to find concrete ways to broaden its base.

Finally, it is worth briefly analyzing the proposition that South Africa is a 'gateway' to, or a key partner in, Africa for India, commercially speaking. One, it rests on the assumption that the role is necessary. But is it? As Africa's prospects for peace and stability have improved and its economic growth trajectory has risen upward, South Africa is not the continent's only, nor its most obvious, entry point for India Inc., except in Southern Africa (Games 2012). Rather, there are multiple business gateways into the rest of Africa including Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, and Mauritius, among others, with which India has equally strong historical links. In 2010, Bharti Airtel successfully bought the Kuwaiti firm Zain's African operations and based its headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya—following a failed attempt to acquire South Africa's communications giant, MTN (Mobile Telephone Networks), in 2009 (McCann 2011: 108–9; Sidiropoulos 2011: 10). 'Official' New Delhi, too, has shown a distinct preference for dealing directly with individual African countries and/or subregions in its economic diplomacy, and hosted the first India–Africa summit in 2008, with the second held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in 2011.

Peace and Security

Beyond the realm of economic diplomacy, peace and security issues offer scope for deepening the India–South Africa 'strategic partnership', given the two countries' shared concerns about maritime security in the western Indian Ocean Rim (IOR) and political stability on the African continent. Arguably, this is an area in which India—with its decades of peacekeeping experience—has an edge over its Asian rival, China, which is an economically more dominant player in Africa in general; but cooperation in this area has so far been limited in the burgeoning of India's ties with South Africa.

Maritime security in the Indian Ocean Rim: India and South Africa are key regional actors on the IOR that have an important leadership role to play in terms of ensuring the security of what is 'the world's most important route for the movement of long-haul cargo' (Cordner 2011: 73). The vast bulk of India's crude oil imports from the Middle East and Africa—not to mention the rest of its trade, including coal from Mozambique and gold from South Africa—pass through the Indian Ocean, making the security of its sea-lanes a critical concern for New Delhi. The emergence of piracy off the Horn of Africa has only served to underline this concern in a region that lacks an effective

and substantive framework to manage such threats (see Cordner 2011). Furthermore, the IOR has also emerged as an arena of strategic competition, as China's presence has grown in the region, with President Hu Jintao ending his African tour in the Seychelles in 2007; and precipitated anxiety in New Delhi about Beijing's attempt to encircle it with a 'string of pearls' strategy (Vines and Oruitemeka 2008: 11–12; see also Vines 2011).

With sub-Saharan Africa's most capable and effective navy, South Africa is a key strategic partner for India in the western IOR. Tshwane though—as Elizabeth Sidiropoulos (2011: 8) notes—has been reluctant to deploy its navy for anti-piracy operations off the Horn of Africa for various reasons including: a post-apartheid reluctance to project power in the absence of a common African maritime strategy; and a belief that the problem of piracy is a consequence of the failure of peacebuilding in Somalia. However, as the threat has moved to its own littoral, the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) has participated in multinational operations to safeguard the Indian Ocean's sea-lanes.

Since 2003, annual talks between the two countries' navies 'have formed the basis of professional personnel exchanges, training course[s], [combined naval] exercises, mutual revision of naval doctrine, and high-level visits' (Sidiropoulos 2011: 8). In 2005, for example, the Indian and South African navies conducted combined naval exercises off the African coast, while the two countries' air forces also took part in a combined air defense exercise in 2004 (Vines and Oruitemeka 2008: 12–13). However, there has been an ad hoc quality to the more concrete forms of this engagement, and defense cooperation between the two countries has lacked a proper geostrategic framework. The Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS)—an Indian initiative inaugurated in 2008—has largely remained a forum for 'minor and relatively low-level, navy-to-navy cooperation' on professional and technical issues, which lacks political direction and modalities for government-to-government interaction (Cordner 2011: 80). Both India and South Africa are founding members of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), but for long neither showed much enthusiasm for providing it with leadership or developing it into a key forum for security cooperation in a maritime region of critical importance to both (Vines and Oruitemeka 2008: 12–13; Cordner 2011: 80). Although there has been some recent indication of change, with the identification—under India's chair (2011–13)—of the association's six priority areas, including maritime security and safety; and with South Africa set to take over the IORA chair from Indonesia at the end of 2017.

Peacekeeping: From the outset, India has been one of the largest troop-contributing countries to UN peacekeeping missions; and, in the post-Cold War period, deployed in significant numbers to some of the world organization's most complex missions in Africa, including Liberia, Sierra Leone, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC): in 2013, about 80 per cent of India's 8,000-odd 'blue helmets' were deployed in Africa. South Africa, on the other hand, is a 'newer' peacekeeping nation that has over the past two decades become a key contributor to peace and security in Africa. Although Tshwane—not unlike New Delhi—has a strong preference for the peaceful settlement of disputes, it has deployed troops (not all 'blue helmets') in modest numbers to a number of African conflicts, including Burundi, Central African Republic (CAR), Congo, and

Sudan; and sought actively to mediate crises (for example, Zimbabwe) under the multilateral umbrellas of the SADC and the African Union. Though details remain unclear, it will be contributing to a SADC Brigade (SADCBRIG)—one of five subregional brigades of an African Standby Force (ASF) that seeks to give the AU rapid reaction capacity to address conflicts in its backyard (see CCR 2013a). However, the SANDF lacks experience and training for its larger present-day peacekeeping role (CCR 2014: 13–15), making for a key area in which cooperation between South Africa and India could effectively be deepened.

In 1999, India participated alongside South Africa in Exercise Blue Crane, one of the largest SADC training exercises for peace support operations at the time (Beri 2000). While service-level exchanges and joint military drills have taken place between the two countries (as mentioned above), these have not focused specifically on military training and cooperation in peacekeeping. Since 2008, the navies of India and South Africa, as well as Brazil, have taken part in a joint maritime exercise—known as the IBSAMAR initiative—every two years to improve interoperability between their forces, which could help to deepen their engagement in this key area (see Khurana 2008; Kornegay 2012a).

Multilateral Relations: The 'African Agenda'

Arguably, the multilateral aspect of India–South Africa relations is more significant than their bilateral 'strategic partnership'. Both countries are founding members of IBSA, a dialogue forum that provides a framework for cooperation by India, South Africa, and Brazil in a range of sectors from health and education to defense; as well as on global governance issues within various multilateral forums. Within the World Trade Organization (WTO), for example, New Delhi and Tshwane have coordinated closely in the Doha Round's non-agricultural market access (NAMA) negotiations; and are collaborators at the UN in the campaign to reform its Security Council, with both desirous of permanent membership of the body. Together with China and Brazil, India and South Africa also comprise the BASIC group, which has sought to negotiate jointly on climate change since 2009. And, in 2011, South Africa formally joined India in the BRICS bloc. For both India and South Africa, their participation in these emerging power alliances is motivated by a powerful shared desire to shape a more just, equitable, and democratic multipolar world order; as well as an ambition to wield greater clout in the management of it.

At the same time, while the two countries have a broadly similar worldview, they do not necessarily agree on every multilateral issue, including the modalities of global governance reform. Beyond the particulars, South Africa's desire to uphold Africa's continental positions, as Sidiropoulos (2011) also argues, has been a key constraint on greater cooperation with India. Given its apartheid past as a destabilizing outcast on the African continent, post-apartheid South Africa's foreign policy has on the whole been acutely sensitive to the need to act, and to be seen to be acting, in the region's interests: this

is both a normative and pragmatic position that sees the country's future, not to mention its leadership ambitions, inextricably intertwined with that of Africa as a whole. In other words, Tshwane's ability and willingness to collaborate with New Delhi is best understood in the context of its strategic priorities, conceptualized by Francis Kornegay (2012b: 200–1), among others, as concentric circles: Southern Africa, Africa, and the wider international arena. India, on the other hand, is able to act more boldly in its 'national' interest 'without being constrained by a regional position or perspective' (Sidiropoulos 2011: 5). To illustrate:

Climate change: In 2009, at the 15th Conference of Parties (COP15) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCC) held in Copenhagen, Denmark, and in the lead-up to it, South Africa and India coordinated closely with each other. Together with China and Brazil, they negotiated jointly as the BASIC group and played a key role in brokering the Copenhagen Accord, securing agreement from the United States, in particular, for their proposals, while the EU was sidelined. BASIC cooperation has since continued with regular meetings held at the ministerial level; and the group has maintained broad unity on the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities, while stressing alignment with developing country interests through its commitment to Group of 77 (G-77) positions (Olsson et al. 2010). At the same time, the group's solidarity has been tested, with strains evident between India and South Africa in terms of how far they are able and willing to go in their insistence on differentiation and of their willingness to meet developed country demands (Hurrell and Sengupta 2012: 472).

From the outset, as Kornegay (2012b: 208) points out, 'South Africa was informed by wider pan-African interest in a climate agenda addressing Africa's concerns than any of its BASIC partners seemed informed by similar concerns in their respective regions.' As negotiations have continued for a final agreement, South Africa has faced greater pressure 'to fight for higher mitigation ambition' from African states, many of which are most at risk from the negative impacts of climate change (SSEE 2012: 71). After COP15, Tshwane came under 'some criticism from within Africa ... for being seen to cooperate in the smaller BASIC group' (Olsson et al. 2010: 3). Later, in 2011, at the 17th Conference of Parties (COP17) held in Durban, South Africa supported the African Group's call for a legally binding agreement for all countries—developed and developing—by 2015, sacrificing BASIC cohesion and leaving India, in particular, 'isolated, and fighting its own corner' (Hurrell and Sengupta 2012: 472; see also Kornegay 2012b: 208). More recently, in 2013, Tshwane again differed from India and broke ranks from the BASIC group position by formally demanding a comprehensive and legally binding protocol with targets, commitments, and actions for all parties; India, on the other hand, has argued for keeping the form of the agreement open to negotiation (Sethi 2013).

Responsibility to protect (R2P): In 2011–12, India and South Africa served together on the UN Security Council for the first time, creating a unique opportunity for them to identify and work together on issues of common concern.[3] The Arab Spring, in particular events in Libya and Syria, was a dominant item on the Security Council's agenda during their tenure. On Resolution 1973, which formed the basis for the North Atlantic

Treaty Organization (NATO)-led action against Libya, South Africa joined the other two African members on the Council—Nigeria and Guinea-Bissau—in voting for it, while India abstained. Although both New Delhi and Tshwane effectively authorized the NATO intervention, it did not completely hide the cracks in the relationship between them. First, South Africa again showed that it attached a greater priority to upholding African solidarity than to aligning with India (and its BRICS/IBSA counterparts—its vote was the odd one out in both groupings). Though there was greater unity between India and South Africa subsequently in terms of their criticism of the disproportionate use of force by NATO and the mission creep to 'regime change', their shared wariness to act in the Syrian crisis initially, and their later willingness 'to do something' in the face of developments on the ground.

Second, it pointed to a deeper tension on the concept of responsibility to protect between New Delhi and Tshwane. R2P—which was invoked by UN Security Council Resolution 1973—has been embraced in Africa, where it has been given its most concrete expression in Article 4(h) of the African Union's Constitutive Act of 2000, which grants African countries the collective right to intervene in a member state to prevent mass atrocities. Indeed, South Africa's Thabo Mbeki (1999–2008)—working alongside Nigeria's Olusegun Obasanjo—played a key role in ensuring the R2P article's inclusion in the AU's architecture (Landsberg 2007: 197–203). On the other hand, India's support (if that) for R2P is threadbare, with New Delhi extremely reluctant to depart from traditional ideas about sovereignty and non-intervention as the foundation of international order (see Virk 2013a). In this respect, although India and South Africa are both democracies that accept the imperative of protecting and promoting human rights, this translates into different foreign policy positions that are in turn rooted, at least in part, in their particular regional contexts.

UN Security Council reform: The question of UN Security Council reform is an additional source of tension between India and South Africa, and as Sidiropoulos (2011: 5) writes, it is the issue on which 'South Africa's desire not to break ranks with the AU is most apparent'. Arguably, India's bid for a permanent seat on an expanded Security Council has become a defining feature of its foreign policy; South Africa was initially less forthright about its ambition, but declared it more openly once Nigeria, its continental rival, staked its claim to a permanent African seat. Be that as it may, in 2010, New Delhi and Tshwane expressed mutual support for their respective candidacies (SCR 2010: 4–5). However, South Africa has been bound by the African common position on UN Security Council reform—the Ezulwini Consensus of 2005—in favor of two African permanent members with veto power; even though the country's own position may, in fact, be closer to India's. Within the African Group, in the lead-up to the Ezulwini Consensus, South Africa (along with Nigeria) had argued for a more flexible African posture that did not insist on the veto—akin to the stance adopted by India in the Group of Four (G-4)—but it was unable to win the day; and it has since upheld the Ezulwini Consensus, making no move to break from it (CCR 2013b: 13). This has inhibited closer India–South Africa cooperation in the campaign for UN reform: South Africa is not a member

of the G-4, comprising Brazil, Germany, India, and Japan, which campaign together actively for permanent seats.

Conclusion

In a nutshell, the contemporary relationship between India and South Africa is wide-ranging, covering the gamut from burgeoning bilateral trade ties to cooperation on multilateral issues such as climate change. It is also a thin relationship that has shifted somewhat from its yesteryear foundations of Afro-Asian solidarity, but is—unsurprisingly after a mere span of two decades—yet to locate itself in a more substantive strategic framework that goes beyond the two countries' material needs for economic growth and development.

While it has the potential to mature, perforce, driven by historical, commercial, and even strategic imperatives, the depth and richness that their ties could achieve is open to question. Going forward, one of the biggest challenges that South Africa faces relates to how it will manage the push-and-pull between the global aspirations that it shares with India and its 'African agenda' (Sidiropoulos 2011: 15). The corresponding issue for India will relate to the extent to which it can create a more concrete and transparent synergy between its hard economic interests in Africa and the continent's own developmental and peacebuilding agenda. Even this is unlikely to remove every irritant in the India–South Africa relationship, given the disparities in their priorities: while Africa is central to South Africa's foreign policy, the continent per se occupies a narrower strategic space in India's interest matrix. Furthermore, there are tensions that relate to their individual contexts, such as differences in the balance that they are willing to strike between human rights protection and sovereignty, and the disparities in their national circumstances that will inevitably yield divergence in their positions on climate change.

However, considerable potentiality exists, yet to be explored, particularly in peace and security matters, but also in terms of finding greater complementarity in the economic realm for a stronger and more substantive strategic partnership between these two emerging powers.[4]

Notes

1. This paragraph and the next two paragraphs are largely based on Gupta (2008).
2. This paragraph and the next two paragraphs draw on Virk (2013b).
3. The discussion in this section is largely based on CCR (2013b).
4. The author would like to thank Margaret Struthers, Librarian of the Centre for Conflict Resolution's Peace Library, for her invaluable time and assistance in finding research resources for the writing of this chapter.

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CHAPTER 41

UNBREAKABLE BOND

Africa in India's Foreign Policy

CONSTANTINO XAVIER

ANCHORED in centuries of close exchanges across the Western Indian Ocean, India's relations with Africa have recently entered a new phase. This chapter starts by reviewing how historical links developed over four phases, until the early 2000s. In the second section, it identifies six drivers of India's new interest in Africa: accessing new energy sources, investment and trade opportunities, the security of East Africa's sea lanes of communication, protecting its diaspora, enlisting diplomatic support for its multilateral positions, and also a competitive dynamic with China and other rising powers. The third section reviews New Delhi's institutional capacity and expertise on Africa at the official governmental, private sector, and civil society levels, and also highlights the domestic debate on the country's ideal posture towards China and other external powers in Africa. Rejecting extremist positions that either mimic China's presence or bank on exceptionalism, the final section concludes by identifying six areas where India may develop a long-term comparative advantage to pursue its interests more efficiently in Africa.

SHADES OF THE PAST: FROM THE SIDDIS TO OIL

India's intense cultural and economic ties with Africa predate the modern era: for centuries, migration and trade networks linked the subcontinent, especially its Western coast, to the eastern shores of Africa.[1] The colonial period, and the advent of a new political economy in the Indian Ocean region, accelerated these flows, with parts of Eastern Africa often administered from Portuguese or British India: Mozambique, for example, fell under the rule of Goa until 1752. By the end of the nineteenth century, dozens

of thousands of former Bantu-origin slaves, known as the Siddi communities, had settled across the subcontinent, some forming the African Cavalry Guard of the Nizam of Hyderabad.

In the other direction, following old Arab trading routes, India's coastal merchant communities such as the Khojas and Bhoras, mainly from Gujarat, the Konkan and Malabar regions, consolidated their presence in Eastern and Southern Africa, serving as entrepreneurial intermediaries in the wider British colonial trading network. The number of indentured and free 'passenger' Indians also increased dramatically, and the construction of the Uganda Railway alone (1896–1901) employed more than 30,000 Indian labourers (Tinker 1974).

With Mohandas K. Gandhi, who had first arrived in South Africa in 1893 and helped found the Natal Indian Congress there, India's anti-colonial freedom movement started to assume a wider dimension in Africa, where it inspired many similar causes. While Gandhi's focus was mostly ethnic, demanding rights for Indian workers, his activism also helped plant the seeds of a native African liberal current of civic rights that was to emerge in full force in subsequent decades (Park 1965: 352).

Even before 1947, during its formative pre-independence period, India was thus already playing the most important non-Western, external role in supporting Africa's incipient anti-colonial struggles, and this influence further increased in the 1950s. As New Delhi emerged in 1949 as the capital of a new sovereign republic, only four other nations enjoyed the same status in Africa: Egypt, Ethiopia, Liberia, and South Africa. In this new phase, India thus assumed a triple importance for many of Africa's young anti-colonial leaders: first, the success of its Gandhian and non-violent mass movement offered an alternative method to the popular socialist teachings of armed struggle and revolution; second, the establishment and survival of its modern, secular, democratic, and quasi-federal state despite chronic underdevelopment, diversity, and security threats contradicted European theses about the impracticability of post-colonial self-governance; and third, its significant diplomatic clout and the rising international stature of Jawaharlal Nehru translated into valuable operational support, strategic guidance, and global visibility for their freedom struggles.

This explains how India assumed a highly influential role in Africa during 1950s, whether through semi-official links with leaders like Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, and Obafemi Awolowo of Nigeria, or by establishing formal diplomatic representations there when self-rule was yet to be achieved. Apa Pant played the most notable role, serving between 1948 and 1954 as India's Commissioner to East Africa, Central Africa, and the Belgian Congo.

At the international level, Nehru also took up African causes during the Asian Relations Conference in New Delhi (1947); at the non-aligned meetings and deliberations in Colombo (1954), Bandung (1955), and Belgrade (1961); and at the United Nations General Assembly, where a new Afro-Asian third block consolidated around issues like Algeria, the Suez, or the Congo, and led, in 1960, to the historic Resolutions 1514 and 1541 and the creation of the UN Special Committee on Decolonization. Beyond the realm of diplomacy, India's commitment on the ground to ensure peace and stability in Africa

was also apparent during the Congo crisis by deploying more than 5,000 men and suffering more than 150 casualties during the UN peacekeeping operation there.

India's presence in Africa gradually moved into a third, less vibrant phase by the early 1960s. Circumstances had changed along three dimensions. First, in October 1962, with the independence of Uganda, 32 nations had now achieved political freedom in Africa, most of them through peaceful transitions negotiated with London and Paris. India's diplomatic support had often been crucial, but was no longer as necessary as these nations moved on to set up their new state apparatus and own socio-economic models of development. Nowhere was this more apparent than after the 1962 China war, when to New Delhi's shock many African governments either remained neutral or supported the claims of Beijing, which had launched a major propaganda offensive during the third Afro-Asian solidarity conference held in Tanzania in February of 1963.

Second, in tandem with the eruption of armed anti-colonial struggle in Portuguese Africa and of ethnic conflict, separatism, and civil war in several newly independent nations, Africa plunged into a phase of chronic instability and militarization often used as a proxy for Cold War rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union (USSR). So despite India's continued diplomatic dexterity and commitment to denounce issues like the apartheid regime in South Africa (relations were cut in 1946), white rule in Southern Rhodesia, or Portuguese colonialism, it now lacked both the will and capacity to influence military conditions on the ground. With the progressive militarization of intra- and interstate conflicts, the terms of presence and influence in Africa had changed dramatically from the 1950s. Despite remaining active on the multilateral front, India's overall influence decreased, reflected in the fact that by 1965 only seven African countries maintained a diplomatic representation in New Delhi, and that Radio Peking now streamed twice as many hours of African contents than All India Radio (Sauldie 1965).

A third negative factor that emerged in this third phase related to the large Indian diaspora in the post-independence nations of East and Central Africa. Often in a privileged economic situation and legally exposed as foreign nationals, these communities became a target for a wave of xenophobia that escalated into discriminatory laws, violence, and mass expulsion, most notably in Kenya in 1968, and in Uganda in 1972. Charged with promoting 'neo-colonialism' through its diaspora, India tried to dissociate itself from these people of Indian origin on grounds that they were not, nor had ever been Indian citizens (many held British documents), but there were unavoidable negative repercussions for its diplomatic relations with many African governments.

With India's economic reforms in the 1980s and 1990s, relations with Africa moved into a third phase and the continent initially fell even further back among New Delhi's priority areas, as the country focused on trade and investment opportunities with developed countries in North America, Europe, and Asia. Africa's share in India's global trade decreased, and New Delhi closed some of its diplomatic missions on the continent, which remained engulfed in a series of shaky post-conflict democratic transitions. Then, in the early 2000s, Africa suddenly re-emerged on India's strategic radar just as a first decade of reforms started to accelerate domestic economic growth, to encourage newly-emerged private manufacturing, industrial and service sectors to look for

foreign markets, and to force policy-makers to reduce the country's oil reliance on the Middle East.

This revolutionary change led to the establishment of a new India–Africa Project Partnership in 2005, a series of regional conclaves, and the first-ever India–Africa summit, held in New Delhi in 2008. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) expanded its Africa resources and opened new diplomatic missions, mostly in West Africa, and in a symbolic move, Nigeria again hosted an Indian Prime Minister after almost half a century. Often sidelined as a mere hunting ground for votes whenever New Delhi's core interests were at stake at the United Nations, Africa suddenly rose to become one of India's many new foreign policy priorities.

The Six Drivers of India's New Interest

What drives India's new interest in Africa? There are six factors that present significant stakes for Delhi's diplomacy to successfully realize domestic interests abroad and that connect Africa to India's external development strategy, posture, and ambitions.

The first driver relates to the quest for external oil, coal, and other natural resources to fuel India's energy mix and economic growth. Since embracing economic reforms in the early 1990s, the country has risen to become the world's third and fourth largest consumer of coal and oil, respectively. But while its domestic crude oil production increased by only 10 per cent since 1989, its consumptions trebled, intensifying its import reliance, estimated to reach 80 per cent by 2020. Africa thus assumes an important role in India's attempt to diversify its traditional dependence on the Gulf region, from where it sourced up to two-thirds of its oil imports until the late 1990s. This shift led to a triplication in oil imports from Africa between 2002 and 2012, India now sourcing more than a quarter of its imports from the continent, with Nigeria, Angola, Egypt, and Algeria as its largest suppliers. By 2016, an estimated 10 per cent of Indian oil imports will be sourced from Nigeria alone.[2]

This race for resources has led several Indian companies to set their eyes on opportunities in Africa, with important investments since the mid-2000s in coal, gas, and copper explorations. Public sector enterprises such as ONGC, or private sector groups such as Reliance, Tata, or Jindal, have made unprecedented forays into Nigeria, Angola, Mozambique, and Sudan, often with governmental support: between 2004 and 2013, 33 per cent of India's operative lines of credit for African countries were in the energy sector (Taraporevala and Mullen 2013).

Finally, India's ambitions to develop the nuclear share in its energy mix after the 2008 agreement with the United States have also drawn attention to Africa, where it has attempted to source uranium from Niger, South Africa, and Namibia (Pretorius 2011: 324). India is also driven by its quest for other mineral resources such as gold or rough diamonds, of which it is the world's largest importer, mostly from Angola.

The second driver relates to the burgeoning trade and investment volumes between India and Africa. This is a two-way story, with mostly natural resources and low-value manufactured goods making their way to India in exchange for a rising number of mid- and high-value manufactured goods and investments making their way to Africa. Total trade volumes between indicate the magnitude of the change in the relationship, rising from a mere US$4.4 billion in 2000 to over US$72 billion in 2013.[3] As India's emerging manufacturing sector searches for new consumer markets, the unprecedented economic growth story in sub-Saharan economies over the last decade also offers attractive new opportunities. Indian policy-makers thus increasingly recognize the strategic importance of Africa's rising economies and emerging middle classes to stimulate the comparative advantage of its export-intensive sectors.

For example, the share of India's ExIm Bank lines of credit dedicated to Africa rose from 32 per cent ($0.9 billion) in 2004–5 to 53 per cent ($8.2 billion) in 2011–12, stimulating African demand because these loans are conditioned on sourcing 75 per cent of goods and services from India. Pharmaceutical products, industrial fuels, machinery, and vehicles now dominate India's export profile to Africa, leading also to a rise in Indian investments, from US$3.2 billion in 2008 to US$5.8 billion in 2012. All this led to an unprecedented rise in Indian exports to Africa, from US$5.5 billion in 2004–5 to over US$24 billion in 2011–12 (Taraporevala and Mullen 2013).The surge in trade and investment is not unique to India's relations with Africa, and absolute indicators are equally impressive with Latin America and other regions, but the relative importance of the continent has increased without doubt. Africa's share in India's global trade rose from 6 per cent ($4.8 billion) in 1997–8 to almost 10 per cent ($68 billion) in 2013–14, even while only Nigeria and South Africa make it among India's top 25 trade partners.

A third driver of India's new interest relates to Africa's geographic proximity and New Delhi's realization that its economic growth and developmental strategy is increasingly dependent on a benign security environment that transcends its immediate neighbourhood. In order to source and transport oil and other goods to its shores, to keep sea lanes of communication secure, or to protect its expatriate citizens and strategic investments abroad, India's security horizons and defence capabilities must expand accordingly. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the Indian Ocean, with an increasing overlap of India's security interests and areas of influence with those of East African coastal states, especially to counter the threat of piracy and transnational crime.

Africa thus plays an increasingly important role in India's maritime reorientation—the continental, land-based threats from the North no longer monopolizing attention and resources. At the multilateral level, this led to the launch in 2008 of the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium with officials from 35 countries, 13 of which integrate its East African littoral sub-group. India also took a proactive stance in trying to revive the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC), initially created in 1995 with 18 member states, including four East African states (South Africa, Mozambique, Tanzania, Kenya), as well as Madagascar and Mauritius, which hosts its permanent secretariat. Finally, the IBSA (India, Brazil, South Africa) trilateral launched in 2003 also included an important maritime component, leading to four rounds of joint naval exercises in Southern Africa's Indo-Atlantic link waters.

At the bilateral level, this has also led to a variety of new naval ties between India and Africa's coastal states, including joint exercises and patrols. As these states seek to develop their defence capabilities, India has also shown interest in assuming a more proactive role as a military supplier, having signed defence agreements or military cooperation and training agreements with more than 15 African countries, often reviving earlier efforts of the 1950s, when New Delhi had played an important role in setting up military academies and training officials in newly-independent countries (Dutta 2007).

The fourth driver concerns the safety of an increasing number of Indian expatriates now residing in African countries, as well as their potential to further facilitate deeper economic and strategic relations with the continent. Beyond the traditionally large communities of people of Indian origin (PIOs) settled mostly in Central, Eastern, and Southern Africa since the late nineteenth century, the continent witnessed the arrival of a new non-resident Indian (NRI) citizen-diaspora in recent years, more diverse both in its professional profile (ranging from unskilled labour to highly-educated professionals) and in its geographic distribution (with new concentrations in Western and Northern Africa).

A 2001 estimate identified more than one million people of Indian origin (several hundreds of thousands in South Africa, 25,000 in Madagascar, 15,000 in Zimbabwe, and 8,000 in Nigeria). More impressive is the exponential growth in expatriate Indian citizens resident in African countries, from less than 100,000 in 2001, to more than 200,000 by 2012, with important concentrations in Kenya (38,000), Nigeria (30,000), South Africa (18,000), Libya, Mauritius, and Uganda (15,000 each), Zambia (12,500), and Ghana (10,000).[4] This poses a new burden on India's consular apparatus, which must monitor and service these emigrants, and often also execute complex crisis evacuation operations, such as in Libya in 2011. At the same time, however, policy-makers in the External Affairs, Commerce, and Overseas Indian Affairs ministries have also set up a variety of initiatives in collaboration with private banks and business chambers to tap into the potential role of both these older PIO and newer NRI diaspora communities to represent, facilitate, and promote India's interests across Africa.

The fifth driver relates to the large and increasing diplomatic weight that African countries hold in several international institutions and negotiation arenas where India's core interests are at stake. These range from trade and investment regulations to migration, intellectual property, and environmental policies. The rapidly evolving global governance system may be shifting towards more oligopolistic and exclusive structures, from the G-2 to the G-20, but the absolute weight of more than 50 African states remains strong both in traditional forums such as the United Nations and also newer forums. Indian and African diplomatic interests may not always coincide, but there are significant overlaps. For example, India's exceptional nuclear status after the bilateral agreement with the United States in 2008 was made possible by the overt support from South Africa at crucial IAEA and NSG votes, as well as to the implicit support of most African states despite the 1996 African Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty, which is ambivalent about relations with nuclear states that are outside the NPT regime (Pretorius 2011).

At the United Nations, the regional Africa group also played an important role in the elections that led India seven times to a non-permanent seat in the Security Council,

most recently in 2011–12 with an impressive 187 votes. Now represented with 53 states, Africa accounts for more than a quarter of total UN membership and India's ambitions for a permanent seat in a reformed UNSC, whether through the G-4 or any other proposal, hinges on this support. This also applies to attempts to increase voting shares in the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, where India's position has consistently overlapped with those of most African states, in favour of greater representation from developing countries.

Similarly, India's rising multilateral profile and the success of its positions on a range of new issue-areas and global challenges will depend on its capability to craft understandings with many African states, whether it is to oppose the inclusion of labour and environmental standards in the WTO rounds of negotiation, resist more stringent carbon caps on the industrial sector, or foster non-proliferation and disarmament (Mukherjee and Malone 2011).

The sixth and final driver relates to the structural level and the increasing competitive dynamic affecting Sino-Indian relations in third spaces, beyond Asia. All five previous drivers reflect a typical rising power posture that necessarily leads to the securitization of new areas, whether it is to access energy resources and new consumer markets, further extra-regional diplomatic influence, or develop military capabilities to protect and evacuate expatriates abroad.

Beyond punctual differences in form and style, such immediate Indian interests significantly overlap with those of China in Africa, leading to an implicit competitive dynamic as both powers seeks to satisfy their domestic growth rates and rising nationalist expectations by consolidating new zones of influence that traditionally fell in the almost exclusive orbit of either the United States, the former Soviet Union, or other declining European powers. This rivalry may not always be apparent in official Indian discourses, but it does shape Indian perspectives on the urgency to gain a quick foothold in various African regions and key economic sectors in order not to lose a potential first-mover advantage. This competitive dynamic, in particular with China but more broadly also with other rising regional powers or high-growth economies such as Brazil, South Korea, Turkey, or Japan, may also be instigated by African governments as a negotiation strategy to reap the best possible returns.

Hardware, Software, and the Exceptionalist Enticement

Given these six drivers and new stakes, how have India's capabilities to study, monitor, and reach out to key African states changed in recent years? Similarly, how has the renewed importance affected Africa's image and relative priority in Indian strategic thinking?

On the hardware side, regarding institutional expertise and capacity, there have been three significant changes.[5] First, at the governmental level, the MEA has implemented a

variety of new initiatives to expand its human and material resources on Africa, starting with the bifurcation in 2003, of a single Joint Secretary position for all of sub-Saharan Africa into two, one each for West Africa (WA, 25 countries) and the other for East and South Africa (E&SA, 24 countries). Together with their colleague for West Asia and North Africa (WA&NA), who oversees relations with Africa's five Mediterranean states, these three officials connect with a rapidly expanding network of 27 embassies or high commissions, five consulate generals, and 15 honorary consulates, the largest such missions being located in South Africa, Egypt, Mauritius, Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania, Angola, Sudan, and Ethiopia. Several new missions have been opened in recent years, including in Mali, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Niger, and South Sudan. While the MEA retains its pivotal position in foreign policy, it is, however, increasingly forced to coordinate with a variety of other ministries that have recently developed their own stakes and expertise on Africa, including those of Trade, Industry and Commerce, Defence, Overseas Indian Affairs, and Petroleum and Natural Gas.

A second change relates to the key role played by the private sector in fostering relations with Africa, as trade and investment opportunities create a new business constituency devoted to closer relations. Under the umbrella of the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), both of which have dedicated Africa desks that work in close consultation with the MEA, large conglomerates such as the Tata group, Kirloskar, or Reliance, as well as smaller trading houses in the primary and manufacturing sectors have pushed for and funded several initiatives, including a series of bilateral and regional India–Africa business conclaves, as well as new EXIM bank lines of credit and loans.

Finally, at the level of civil society, India–Africa relations have also gone through a revitalization period in recent years, with a rising number of students enrolling in expanded graduate and research programmes on Africa at premier Indian universities as well as the creation of a new African Studies Association (2003). Beyond academia, a variety of new Track II dialogues, research projects, and conferences on Africa are now hosted by New Delhi's burgeoning think-tank circle, with special emphasis on energy, trade, and investment issues.

On the software side, Africa's position in Indian strategic thinking has also undergone rapid change and stimulated an interesting debate on the country's ideal posture towards competition there with established Western powers, China, and other emerging economies. As discussed in the sixth driver above, at one extreme of the debate, many analysts argued in the mid-2000s for an approach to mimic and match Chinese companies' colossal entry into the African natural resources sector. However, in the haste for primacy, such an unrealistic proposal ignored China's first-mover advantage, as well as the unsustainable costs of competing with China's state-financed companies and of hyperinflation in the African natural resources markets. Nowhere was this more apparent than in Angola where, in 2006, China's Sinopec bid for an offshore oil block trounced India's ONGC by more than twice the value.

On the opposing side, an alternative approach related to India's supposed virtues and altruistic interests in Africa. The bureaucratic jargon used to describe New Delhi's Africa policy repeatedly refers to a 'mutually beneficial relationship' to be 'request-based', and

neither 'prescriptive' nor 'conditional' as supposedly with most Western powers, nor 'rapaciously extractive' and 'neo-mercantilist' as supposedly with China.[6] But beyond nuance, this approach rooted in India's exceptionalist tradition is, in fact, not much different from China's much propagated 'win-win' policy. A more balanced interpretation, however, recognizes that 'India's increasingly strategic motivations and goals may indeed have mutual benefits for African countries, sectors and peoples, but the rhetoric should not conceal possible tensions too' (Mawdsley and McCann 2010: 90).

Reflecting this intermediary approach in 2011, Vivek Katju, then India's senior-most diplomat in charge of Africa, recognized his country's strategic interests, material limitations, and distinct profile in Africa by noting that there was a 'complementary role' between India and China, but 'not through any deliberate process': 'there are strengths there [China] and there are strengths here [India]' (IANS 2011). Indeed, rather than the extreme hyperactive approach of seeking to emulate and materially match Chinese forays, and the opposite extreme lethargic approach of believing that its exceptional altruistic and benign posture will eventually be recognized and celebrated by Africans, India may instead deploy its resources in specific areas where it has a comparative advantage. By focusing on such areas, it can maximize its interests and, at the same time, consolidate a more sustainable presence in Africa in the long-term.

Shadow of the Future: Six Comparative Advantages

Most studies on the rising profile of China and India in Africa tend to club both countries together by underlining their similar interests and therefore neglect differences in how they think about and operate in Africa (see e.g. Broadman 2007; Cheru and Obi 2010; Goldstein et al. 2006), leading one analyst to describe India's presence there as remaining in the shadow of China's (Naidu 2010). With an eye on the future, this concluding section briefly explores six distinctive assets or areas in which India retains a comparative advantage that may be further developed to pursue its interests more efficiently.

First, India's image in Africa still derives positive returns from its historical role during the anti-colonial freedom struggles. A new generation has taken over leadership on both sides, and the relationship has moved on to be more transactional and business-oriented, but India's history of firm diplomatic support and leadership against colonialism and racial discrimination continues to resonate with many Africans.

Second, geography continues to matter in a globalized economy, and India's proximity to East Africa offers immense potential for cooperative infrastructure projects to bridge the Western Indian Ocean with new transportation and communication networks. Little more than 3,000 miles separate Zanzibar from Mumbai, and as passenger and cargo volumes between Asia and Africa grow exponentially, India's air and seaports

can emerge as potential connecting hubs. Africa also remains one of the world's least broadband penetrated regions in dire need of new intercontinental connections and new submarine fibre optic links, such as the Seacom/Tata between Eastern Africa and Western India, which attests to the growing Indo-African geo-convergence of interests.

Third, East African coastal states are increasingly looking up to New Delhi as a privileged partner to assist them in combating piracy and in developing their embryonic coast guard and naval capabilities through joint exercises and patrolling, technical and intelligence cooperation, and defence equipment deliveries. From the Gulf of Aden to the Mozambique Channel, India is rapidly emerging as a key actor and partner in the maritime domain, with immense potential to cooperate also on non-traditional security issues such as disaster preparedness, relief operations, environmental protection, and non-combatant evacuation operations. On a wider African scale, by 2008 India's military had also emerged as the largest contributor to UN-mandated peacekeeping and other operations in Africa, with more than 30,000 personnel involved in 17 of 22 total missions on the continent since 1960 (Beri 2008). This allowed hundreds of Indian officials to develop vast ground expertise and valuable contacts with local militaries and warring parties, which is an asset for India's future defence diplomacy in Africa.[7]

Fourth, on the economic front, India's distinct economic model of penetration driven mainly by private sector interests has its own advantages that differ from the state-driven Chinese model. Unlike Chinese businesses in Africa that mostly pursue strategies that 'yield them greater control up and down the production line, resulting in enclave types of corporate profiles, with more limited spillover effects', Indian firms pursue strategies that 'result in greater integration into domestic markets and operate extensively through informal channels' (Broadman 2007: 351). This has important implications for the degree of long-term capacity building, education, and the transfer of skills to local labour forces. India's English-language educational institutions and business sectors offer it another comparative advantage to reach out to and attract African students and professionals. Finally, the large and historical Indian diaspora continues to breed much resentment among Africans, but is far more integrated socio-economically than the massive new Chinese labour diaspora, and therefore remains a privileged intermediary partner for Indian attempts to gain intelligence on local market and political conditions.[8]

Fifth, there is wide scope for India to foster greater regional integration and multilateral cooperation in Africa instead of pursuing a strictly bilateralist approach. The MEA's stated policy triad of engaging Africa simultaneously at the bilateral, regional, and pan-Africa levels is at the source of New Delhi's decision to hold the second Africa–India Summit in 2011, in partnership with the African Union, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPA), and the continent's eight regional economic communities. While many African governments actually prefer the bilateral approach for its swiftness and lesser external exposure, as cross-border relations and regionalism expand, there are also rising African demands for states to increase their bargaining power by negotiating collectively as a block with China, India, and other external powers. India's bet

on the AU and regional cooperation mechanisms may thus pay off in the future (Ikome 2010: 207–11).

Finally, a sixth potential comparative advantage of India in Africa relates to its exceptionally successful democratic experience in preserving territorial integrity and delivering socio-economic development for one of the world's most ethnically, linguistically, and religiously diverse populations with political pluralism. As Africa experiences an unprecedented wave of democratization and transits towards greater political freedom, with new electoral competition replacing entrenched authoritarianism amidst fears of instability, the sustainability of the so-called 'Beijing consensus' of authoritarian and dirigiste growth in Africa is being increasingly called into question. While India remains sceptical about the Western idea of 'democracy promotion', its positive response to increasing requests from African government and civil society organizations to share its expertise on electronic voting systems, electoral management, federalism, parliamentary procedures, decentralization, and local government, as well as on training and managing an independent judicial system to strengthen the rule of law, all reflects an immense potential for inter-democratic cooperation that China won't be able to tap into so soon.

While these six areas offer areas for long-term strategic investment for New Delhi to develop its comparative advantage, it is still undeniable that India's presence in Africa remains incomparably small when compared to China and other external actors, and also profoundly constrained by its lacking capacity to expand its footprint. Unlike China, however, democratic India may derive benefits from the increasingly benign image it enjoys in the United States, Europe, or Japan as a potential partner in third regions. In Washington, for example, in particular after the creation of AFRICOM, there is a growing sense that the 'willingness of New Delhi to commit to peacekeeping, peace enforcement, and nation-building efforts that Washington has largely lacked either the political will or the resources to engage in on the continent ... only complements U.S. efforts to promote greater stability and security in Africa' (Pham 2011: 13–14).

Going forward, external interest in India's particular profile, historical experience, and comparative advantage may present New Delhi's foreign policy-makers with a greater range of options when it comes to choosing partners for triangular cooperation projects on African economic and security issues, whether with the United States, the European Union, Japan, Brazil, or other democratic powers.

Notes

1. For the most comprehensive historical perspective on India-Africa relations until the 1980s, only briefly summarized in this section, see the edited volume by Verinder Grover (1992).
2. For these data on India's energy sector and imports, as well as future estimates, see the India country profile by the US Energy Information Administration, accessible at <http://www.eia.gov/countries/country-data.cfm?fips=IN>.

3. Unless referenced otherwise, data on India's trade with Africa in this and subsequent paragraphs are compiled from the Indian Commerce Ministry's Export-Import Databank, accessible at <http://commerce.nic.in/eidb/default.asp>.
4. The 2001 figures are from the estimates by the High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora, accessible at <http://indiandiaspora.nic.in/diasporapdf/part1-est.pdf> (accessed 25 July 2014). The 2012 figures are from a revised estimate published by the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, accessible at <http://moia.gov.in/writereaddata/pdf/NRISPIOS-Data(15-06-12)new.pdf> (accessed 25 July 2014).
5. This section draws from my earlier research case study on Indian decision-making and institutions on Africa (Xavier 2014).
6. These are all terms employed by acting or retired diplomats and government officials to describe India's approach to Africa during several interviews I conducted over the Summer of 2010, in New Delhi (Xavier 2014).
7. To date, New Delhi has also trained over one hundred military officials from more than twenty African countries at the Center for United Nations Peacekeeping, which it hosts since 2000 in New Delhi.
8. According to a 2007 World Bank survey on Indian and Chinese businesses operating in Africa, 48% of company owners of Indian ethnic origin held African nationality, against only 4% of Chinese company owners. Unlike the Chinese, it thus notes that 'Indian (and European) migrants are substantially integrated into the business community in Africa' (Broadman 2007, 231).

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PART VI

MULTILATERAL DIPLOMACY

CHAPTER 42

INDIA AND GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

POORVI CHITALKAR AND DAVID M. MALONE

Introduction

India's engagement with institutions of global governance has evolved significantly since independence in 1947. The philosophy of India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, largely shaped its foreign policy posture following independence—with anti-imperialism and non-alignment with power blocs of the Cold War as the main pillars of its outlook. Under Nehru, India engaged gingerly with the Commonwealth, which was still dominated by London and its former dominions, but much more actively with the United Nations (UN).

In the 1960s and 1970s, India's enthusiasm for multilateralism waned as its own policy departed from hitherto cherished principles and goals such as non-intervention and nuclear disarmament. Meanwhile the Cold War had undermined some of the potential of the United Nations.

The end of the Cold War drastically changed the foreign policy landscape for India. Eventually, India's position evolved from that of a poor developing nation to an emerging power (albeit one with serious poverty and inequality within its borders). Since the 1990s, owing to its enhanced economic power, overall political stability, and new international significance, India's stature within global governance institutions has risen. India's engagement with them, however, has been inconsistent and its results disappointing. India has continued to advance its interests primarily through bilateral channels wherever possible and championed the creation of several new groupings, including of emerging states.

This chapter begins with a discussion of India's early engagement with international organizations under Nehru and how it evolved thereafter. It then tackles India's struggle for greater recognition internationally in the twenty-first century, primarily through the prism of its quest for a permanent seat in the UN Security Council but also through

the more central role it has played in a number of economic negotiations and forums including the G-20 at Leader level since 2008. It touches upon India's evolving approach to global norms and in conclusion, offers a brief analysis of India's contribution to global governance to date.

This chapter discusses the characteristics of India's multilateral diplomacy spanning a range of issues, which are discussed in greater depth in other chapters in this section of this *Handbook*.

Early Indian Ideas about Global Governance

The early years of independent India's engagement with the world were unsurprisingly influenced by its colonial history. British colonial rule left the subcontinent impoverished, not least as it helped fight two world wars for Great Britain at considerable cost, and shattered by the partition of its territory in 1947 (Maddison 2003; Clingingsmith and Williamson 2004). As a result, India's foreign policy in its early years was above all anti-imperialist in orientation.

After the Second World War, the UN was created primarily as a collective security system to safeguard against future wars. In addition to the UN, this period also saw the emergence of other institutions, which are at the heart of global governance today. In the aftermath of the war, peace was seen to be linked with prosperity, which in turn was thought to depend on free trade, unfettered capital movement, and stable exchange rates (Mikesell 1994). The Bretton Woods Conference of 1944 brought together delegates from 44 countries to create a system to regulate the international monetary and financial order, with at its heart a planned International Trade Organization (for many years replaced by the less ambitious General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)), the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (the World Bank), and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). All of these have been important to India at various times over the decades.

Even before independence, India had been a member of the League of Nations, and then amongst the original members of the United Nations when the organization was formed in 1945. Newly independent India wholeheartedly supported the United Nations and its associated organizations, as the UN Charter resonated strongly with its own posture (Bhagavan 2012). Engagement with the UN allowed India to play up its influence in international affairs through rhetorical skill until it could exert influence more materially (Mukherjee and Malone 2011).

Despite India's commitment to the institution, it suffered a rude setback at the UN in 1947. Faced with the choice of unilaterally repelling a Pakistani attack on Kashmir and militarily consolidating India's hold on the territory, or referring the matter to the UN, Nehru chose the latter. Much to his disappointment, the UN

Security Council failed to endorse India's claim to Kashmir, instead insisting on a plebiscite of the state's population. This disappointment has colored India's thinking on the usefulness to it of multilateral institutions ever since, notably by precluding or limiting sharply the role of the UN within its own region on security issues (Raja Mohan 2003).

In the early years, given its history, India also sought to position itself as a leader of the Third World, arguing for accelerated decolonization and advocating the interests of newly independent countries. This stance was in evidence within the GATT, where India pressed for concessional provisions for developing countries.[1] In 1955, India was a driving force at the Bandung Conference organized to promote Afro-Asian cooperation. At the UN, India championed the Group of 77 (G-77) developing countries on economic and social issues, which remains active today.

The Cold War Period

The acute Cold War confrontation between the West and the East posed a challenge for India. For India, non-alignment was a natural response to the tense post-Second World War international system with strong bloc dynamics. It stressed independence in international decision-making and an opportunity and space to build its foreign policy from the ground-up (Raghavan 2009: 20). Non-alignment allowed India to address as its first priority internal cohesion (fragile at the time) and economic rebirth.

Partly as a defense against the developed nations to whose interests it could fall prey, India continued to engage with the UN, even after the Kashmir debacle there (Chamling 1978: 116). India called for as broad a membership base as possible, and measures to preclude either bloc from appropriating the institution's agenda and resources (Malone 2011: 252). Indeed, despite Western opposition to including a newly communist country, India strongly advocated for the inclusion of the People's Republic of China. It also opposed the 1950 Acheson Plan, the 'Uniting for Peace' resolution which empowered the UN General Assembly to act on security challenges when the Security Council was in deadlock (advocated by the West in order to overcome Soviet veto threats in the Council).

India's policy of non-alignment played out in its active engagement with the United Nations. It contributed to peacekeeping missions, including in the Suez Canal and Congo. In the case of the Korean War, India endorsed the UN intervention but declined to label China as the aggressor or support the crossing of UN troops across the 38th parallel. When the UN intervened in Korea, India sent not troops but a field-ambulance unit (Mukherjee and Malone 2011). Nonetheless, its commitment to strict non-alignment was often called into question. For example, although India criticized Dutch rule in Indonesia, it was less hostile to French rule in Indo-China and the British in Malaysia.

India's refusal to condemn the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956 provoked criticism in the West of its double standards.

Recognizing that non-alignment was a useful organizing principle for the numerous Asian and African countries gaining independence from colonialism, India championed the formation of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in 1956, along with the leaders of Egypt, Indonesia, and Yugoslavia. The first summit of 25 non-aligned countries was held in Belgrade in 1961. Soon after, however, India was to suffer a setback at the NAM. In 1962, China invaded India and only three of these 25 non-aligned countries responded positively to Nehru's appeal for China to be declared an aggressor. As with the UN, however, India continued to engage with the NAM despite this disappointment.

Whilst the Cold War offered shelter to many through alliances, India remained deeply suspicious of these, as its need to maintain independence in international decision-making remained of paramount concern. Indeed, even the NAM was not intended to be a 'third bloc' based on non-alignment. C. Raja Mohan notes, 'The NAM often complemented India's pursuit of its international objectives but never fully supplanted non-alignment, which was India's foreign policy' (Raja Mohan 2004: 30). In 1967, when the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was formed, India remained aloof because of the American hand clearly at play in this development.

Nehru's death in 1964 marked a watershed for India's foreign policy. India's engagement with multilateralism took a backseat in the latter half of the 1960s, as India focused on regional and domestic challenges.

The 1970s witnessed more pronounced estrangement between India and the world. In 1971, India signed a 'Treaty of Friendship' with the Soviet Union, effectively aligning itself and eviscerating the credibility of its commitment to non-alignment. Further, acting on humanitarian as well as strategic considerations, India intervened militarily in East Pakistan resulting in the independence of the territory and the creation of Bangladesh. Despite the atrocities committed there by the Pakistani army, as a result of which millions of refugees had crossed into India, India's actions were sharply criticized both at the UN and by the NAM. India had indeed acted in departure from its strong-held belief in sovereignty and non-intervention, out of a mix of self-serving and humanitarian motivations and found itself nearly completely isolated on the international stage.

A few years later, India relinquished another cherished principle in international affairs. Since independence, India had first championed absolute nuclear disarmament and subsequently nuclear non-proliferation. In 1974, driven by the ambition of nuclear parity with China and also fearing that Beijing could provide nuclear weapons technology to Pakistan, India conducted its first nuclear test. Following this, India was consigned to a diplomatic *purdah* in the field of nuclear safety and non-proliferation. At the same time, it marshaled on as a strong voice for global development not least through a compelling international campaign against apartheid in South Africa by Rajiv Gandhi when Prime Minister in the mid-1980s.

India's New Approach

The end of the Cold War in the early 1990s brought with it many changes, both for India and the world. First, the breakup of the Soviet Union rendered India's policy of non-alignment formally and definitively irrelevant. The seeming emergence of a new unipolar world, in which India entertained a poor relationship with the sole remaining superpower—the United States—was a development for which India was poorly prepared.

Second, this period saw a significant transformation in India's domestic affairs through economic reforms brought on by an acute balance of payments crisis. By 1991, its growing external debt and depleted foreign exchange reserves called for a change of course. Then Indian Finance Minister Manmohan Singh initiated several reforms (devaluation of the rupee, removal of imports quotas, reduction of tariffs), aimed at reassuring international partners. The 'license-permit-quota raj' which had stifled the economy thus far was substantially done away with (or so it seemed at the time) (Guha 2003: 684). None of these measures were radical in absolute terms but together represented significant change, and one that further unleashed economic growth levels in India in the range of 7–9 per cent during the ensuing two decades. India's image internationally changed from one of laggard to emerging success story (albeit one that continues to trail hundreds of millions of ultra-poor citizens). This shift had major implications for India's foreign policy, and its relationship with global governance institutions.

Along with the economic transformation, politics in India also changed. In the 1990s the political hegemony of the Congress Party gave way to greater heterogeneity, and the rise of regional interests in national politics (Chitalkar and Malone 2011). This political fragmentation not only opened up greater space for debate about India's domestic issues but also about its role in the world. Spurred by the country's new economic credentials, India's foreign policy since the early 1990s has been mostly pragmatic with economic objectives increasingly coloring if not dominating its diplomacy.

Finally, as the impasse of the Cold War ended, there was a revival in the relevance of and energy within global governance institutions. The UN Security Council (UNSC) became more active than it had been for several decades (Wallensteen and Johansson 2004). The 1992 Rio Summit on Climate Change which agreed on a Framework Convention on Climate Change, implementation of the Uruguay Round and establishment of the WTO (replacing the GATT) in 1995, and adoption of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) in 1996—all marked a new reinvigorated phase for global governance.

Below, we briefly explore India's stance in some of these global governance institutions and its evolving approach to global norms.

UN Security Council

With growing economic power and the realization that it would want to further secure its evolving interests in the political and security spheres, India began to voice

a demand for greater recognition and representation in the institutions of global governance—including the Security Council. In 1992, Prime Minister Rao called for expansion of the Security Council to maintain its 'political and moral effectiveness' (Daley 1992: 41). In 1991–2, India was elected as a member to the Security Council during a very busy term dealing with crises in Kuwait and Somalia, as well as the fallout of the disintegration of Yugoslavia. With some foresight, India tried to temper the enthusiasm within the Council for intervention. India ran again for an elected seat in the Security Council in 1996, but lost to Japan. The loss was blamed by Indian officials on Japan's 'dollar diplomacy' but it also owed something to the alienation of many countries by India's almost unilateral opposition in the CTBT negotiations earlier that year.

In the run-up to the 2005 UN Summit, India intensified its effort for a permanent seat. It joined Brazil, Japan and Germany (in the G-4) seeking new permanent seats for each of the group.[2] India's claim to enhanced representation was primarily rooted in entitlement.[3] In addition, G-4 members emphasized their weight in international relations, their financial share of the UN's bills, and their contributions to the UN's work such as peacekeeping. However, the G-4's efforts were unsuccessful, because the permanent five members were not supportive of any expansion, because China moved decisively to block Japan's permanent seat aspirations, and because most members states saw the G-4's efforts as a power grab rather than as a move towards greater transparency, accountability, and effectiveness in the Security Council (Malone 2005).

In January 2011, India joined the Security Council once again as an elected member. Many saw this as a 'rehearsal for permanent membership'.[4] Indeed, during its tenure, India was faced with challenging questions of international peace and security including the cases of Libya, Syria, and Iran. On all, India acted cautiously—abstaining on military intervention in Libya on account of the lack of clarity about the situation on the ground and the likely efficacy of military intervention, stressing the need to find a domestic solution to Syria's civil war, and striking a delicate balance between its own significant energy-related bilateral interests in Iran and those of global governance regarding the Iranian nuclear issue.[5] India's overall record of performance over the term was mixed, in part because the issues themselves were so difficult and required not only rhetorical responses but affirmative decision-making. Delhi also appeared somewhat unprepared for the down-side of what Council membership involves—being blamed for its decisions. Although it left a meaningful footprint on issues such as counter-terrorism, piracy, and peacekeeping, it proved uncomfortable with normative challenges and placed excessive emphasis on state sovereignty when faced with humanitarian crises (Mukherjee and Malone 2013).

Climate Change

In climate change negotiations, India's position had long been to stick closely to the terms of the Kyoto Protocol of 1997, under which industrialized countries committed to specific targets for emissions reductions while developing countries were not required

to do so under the 'common but differentiated' responsibilities approach adopted at the UN since the Rio Conference (Mukherjee and Malone 2011).[6] However, implementation of commitments and action by all countries to mitigate climate change soon lagged. After a number of unsatisfactory follow-up conferences, in the run-up to the Copenhagen conference of 2009, India's then dynamic environmental minister—Jairam Ramesh—argued internally for India to drop its traditional 'naysayer' approach and negotiate more constructively. He explained the logic of this stance: 'We are showing some flexibility because we do not want to become isolated. We do not want to earn a reputation as a deal-breaker.'[7] Predictably, his position proved controversial domestically and critics accused him of selling out under foreign pressure.

India's negotiating strategy, working within a coalition of four countries known by the acronym BASIC—Brazil, South Africa, India, and China—has to date worked reasonably well, not least by producing the somewhat threadbare outcome of Copenhagen jointly with the United States. However, any shift by China will create pressure on the other three to offer a change of strategy of their own.

At the Warsaw Conference on Climate Change in November 2013, India aligned itself with a group of 'Like-Minded Developing Countries' (LMDCs) comprising Venezuela, Saudi Arabia, Bolivia, Malaysia, Cuba, Nicaragua, Ecuador, Thailand, and China, hinting at flexibility on form but not much on substance. At the insistence of the LMDCs, emissions goals would take the form of 'commitments' for developed countries but only 'actions' for developing countries. The group also rejected a principle-based framework to assess each country's fair share of emissions preferring the concept of historical responsibility, current capability, and development needs as more desirable criteria for agreement.[8] And as argued by Lavanya Rajamani, India is wielding equity not as a sword to shape the climate agenda but as a shield to guard against mitigation commitments.[9]

Economic Diplomacy

As India's economic reform project took off domestically in the 1990s, the gap between its rapidly growing economic power and the lack of recognition in global economic institutions began to widen. In parallel to its demands for greater recognition at the Security Council, India began to press for 'voice-reform' in international financial institutions (IFIs). Its low voting share in the IFIs has been a continuing source of frustration for India, as discussed by Kirk in this volume (Chapter 44).[10]

As documented by Mehta and Chatterjee in this volume (Chapter 46), India's stance in global economic negotiations has been largely defensive. Domestic economic reforms in 1991 did underscore the importance of trade for India (Kapur 2014).[11] Nonetheless, it continued to emphasize its developing country credentials and form coalitions with other developing countries, seeking concessions. The Doha round discussions of 2007–8 served to cement India's reputation as a 'spoiler' in international trade circles. India's focus on the interests of its (often very poor) farmers was entirely legitimate, but its international tactics seriously defective. A tension between India's domestic political

and social considerations and the interests of its corporate sector arose yet again at the Bali ministerial meeting in December 2013. Nevertheless, on this occasion, India struck a compromise, producing the first negotiated win for the WTO since its inception.

India has also remained reserved about broad regional trade negotiations. It concluded a very limited ASEAN–India Free Trade Agreement but has not participated in the Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations.

In contrast, India's participation in some of the emerging institutional groups has been more constructive and rewarding. Since 2008, and particularly in the wake of the global financial crisis, the G-20 at Leaders level has emerged as the premier forum for international economic consultation. For India, the G-20 represents a 'political graduation' into a smaller group which casts itself as the main forum among major players on global economic and financial issues (Montek Singh Aluhwalia in Malone 2011: 267). It provides India a unique opportunity to reconcile its twin realities: to leverage its macroeconomic weight as an emerging power in order to promote its domestic social and economic development goals (Saran 2012).

As argued in by Saran in this volume (Chapter 45), India has also worked with other emerging economies in a variety of formations. It has promoted the BRICS—Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa—as a coalition of emerging economies, even though their values and interests are not particularly congruent, except in their opposition to Western domination of the global agenda. In 2003, India, Brazil, and South Africa came together to form IBSA, as touched on also in Chapter 45 by Saran (see also Flemes 2007). IBSA presents itself as a natural forum for the leading market-oriented economies of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, and offers a credible platform for South–South cooperation.

Whether, and to what extent these emerging forums, and others such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (with a focus on Central Asia and of which India, Pakistan, and Iran prize their observer status), present serious opportunities for shaping global rules beyond issue-based collaborations between emerging powers remains an open question as their interests often do not align. For example, both India and Brazil aspire for a Security Council seat, which Russia and China are unlikely to favor. Further, several of the BRICS may yet collide in the competition for energy sources and other resources in Africa, and are no longer of one mind on climate change.

Global Norms

In the course of the evolution in India's engagement with institutions of global governance over the years, its positions and approach with respect to global norms have also undergone significant shifts.

Manu Bhagavan's work here (Chapter 43) and elsewhere (2012) lucidly sketches Nehru's vision for 'one world' and India's leadership in the early years after independence towards realizing this vision. Indeed, in this early phase, India led the way in

norm creation, displaying moral authority on the international stage in the wake of its non-violent struggle for independence. At the very first session of the United Nations, the Indian representative, Vijay Lakshmi Pandit, led a strong and effective campaign against South Africa's 'Ghetto Act', which discriminated against the Indian community there (later taking the form of apartheid). Calling the General Assembly the 'conscience of the world' and appealing to a higher, moral ground Pandit led a resounding victory on this South African question, and in the process appeared to lay down a precedent for what the United Nations could achieve (Bhagavan 2010).

In this phase, India took an active stance with respect to norms on grounds of the greater common good, rather than its own national interest. The referral by Nehru of the Kashmir question to the UN in 1948 was an assertion of his belief in collective security. Similarly, in leading the efforts towards drafting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, India strongly argued against the idea that states be allowed to take shelter behind state sovereignty in violating human rights. It championed the establishment of the Human Rights Council despite the obvious risk that it could backfire on India's domestic issues. And its support for nuclear disarmament and arms was not tempered by narrow considerations of national security, as it is today (Raja Mohan 2012).

By the end of the Nehru era, India's disposition with respect to norms began to change, driven by a need to reconcile idealism with realpolitik. On the one hand, in the 1970s and 1980s, India's radical rhetoric regarding norms increased (Raja Mohan 2012). On the other, as noted above, inconsistencies between its stated positions and practice began to emerge starkly. On the nuclear issue, having actively championed the cause of nuclear disarmament thus far, India now criticized the framework of superpower arms control and began to cite sovereignty and security to resist putting its own nuclear activities under the international scanner (Raja Mohan 2012).

Today, India appears to be taking the middle-ground on norms—respecting global norms in principle but remaining cautious in their implementation (Pai 2012). India's approach to the norms regarding sovereignty, intervention, and the responsibility to protect is a case in point. The principle of the responsibility to protect (R2P) was established at the UN Summit in 2005.[12] Although India has remained committed to the principle that states have an obligation to protect their citizens and that the international community has a responsibility to address crimes against humanity and genocide (India is an early signatory to the Genocide Convention), it retains deep skepticism about R2P and its third pillar in particular, which calls for military intervention in extreme cases when all else fails (albeit always with Security Council authorization).[13] This middle-ground approach was demonstrated when in February 2011, India voted for UN Security Council Resolution 1970, reminding the Libyan state of its responsibility to protect its population, but then abstained from Resolution 1973 authorizing an international military action to protect Libyan civilians. Although its decision was widely debated and criticized, both at home and abroad, India appears unlikely to depart from this cautious approach to international principles and norms (Raja Mohan 2011; Hall 2013; Virk 2013).

Similarly, despite its own success as a diverse, multi-ethnic democracy, India has been reluctant to project and promote democracy outside its borders, preferring instead to opt for safer routes by participating in multilateral initiatives like the UN Democracy Fund and providing bilateral technical assistance, for example for the conduct of elections (Chitalkar and Malone 2011; Mehta 2011).

India's approach to nuclear disarmament also demonstrates a cautious approach. In the 1950s, India was at the forefront of an effort towards nuclear disarmament, and Nehru became the first world leader to propose a nuclear test ban. It celebrated the Partial Test-Ban Treaty in 1963 and joined disarmament talks that would eventually lead to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). However, India has been sorely disappointed by the outcome of nuclear diplomacy, which it believes to be discriminatory and 'dividing the world into nuclear haves and have-nots'. As a result, it has stayed out of treaties such as the NPT and the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).[14]

There are several reasons for India's skepticism regarding the implementation of global norms. First, as Nitin Pai has argued, the implementation of norms such as R2P requires selectivity and geopolitical bargaining, leading to considerable acrimony about the motives and legitimacy of interventions (Pai 2012). Second, boldly endorsing norms (such as democracy and human rights) leaves India open to criticism about its domestic record on implementation of them. Finally, to some extent, India's approach has also become more jaded owing to its experience with global practice over time. For example, international isolation after its intervention in Bangladesh on humanitarian grounds and the disappointment over the final outcome of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty have each, at least in some measure, served to change India's attitudes towards a more defensive posture (Pai 2012).

Challenges to India's Embrace of Global Governance

As described here, India's engagement with global governance institutions has evolved over time. It has managed to largely overcome its reputation as a 'moralistic and contrarian loner' in the international community (Perkovich 2003) and become a vital player in a rebalancing of international relations that is today more genuinely (if unevenly) multipolar. India has proven itself capable of working with others, often through selective coalitions to shape solutions. However, several challenges still constrain India from meaningfully participating in, and contributing to global governance institutions.

First, India has sometimes found it difficult to shed some of its earlier positions even in light of its changed status in the world as an emerging power. According to C. Raja Mohan, there is an unresolved tension between the inertia of India's policy positions framed during the early years of building the post-colonial state, and the logic of its emerging power status (Raja Mohan 2004). Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh also noted the

challenge: 'Very often, we adopt political postures that are based in the past, indeed in the distant past and are out of line with our current interests as an increasingly globalized and globally integrated economy.'[15] This tension expressed itself, for example, in the climate change negotiations where the traditional Indian emphasis on limiting the constraining impact of the international system on its freedom of action was at odds with the expectation that it contribute to rule-making (Raja Mohan 2010). Although it is increasingly taken seriously in forums like the G-20, India has continued to exploit its developing country identity in prominent forums like the WTO and Climate Change to seek concessions aggressively, sometimes leading to deadlock. However, as its own interests evolve, the North–South divide is less likely to serve its interests as it so often did in the past.

Second, the 'software' of India's foreign policy—the intellectual and institutional infrastructure required—while often brilliant at the individual level, is too often proven inadequate. Complex global governance challenges of today require specialized expertise and possibly more risk-taking. They require constantly evolving national positions rooted in up-to-date analysis, for which Delhi is not particularly noted. While other countries have not been shy to rely on technical and scientific expertise on issues such as climate change, and in spite of strong scientific credentials of its own, India has been surprisingly unwilling mostly to look beyond its generalist, though dynamic, public servants for policy-making and advocacy purposes.

Third, Indian negotiators are often limited strongly by domestic constraints. The fragmentation of the political space and the resultant coalition politics can make articulation of what constitutes India's 'national interest' a tedious and exasperating process (Chitalkar and Malone 2011: 82). As in the case of climate change negotiations, Indian negotiators are often sharply criticized at home for adopting conciliatory stances in global governance institutions, and accused of caving in to foreign pressure. Further, there is a prevailing hyper-sensitivity in India surrounding some bilateral relationships, particularly China, and the fear of being left behind by China can play an unduly large role in shaping India's positions on the global stage. Although all countries are subject to the push and pull of domestic politics, India has not yet developed a habit of conciliating domestic pressures with a forward-looking results-oriented stance in the multilateral sphere (Chitalkar and Malone 2011: 83).

Conclusion

An aspiration, and indeed a demand, for greater voice and recognition at global governance institutions has increasingly become a driving force of India's foreign policy since the 1990s. On balance, India has been successful at changing its image and at playing a larger role on the global stage. But it has achieved this in large part by relying on its bilateral partnerships, and engaging in global governance by oligarchy, i.e. through smaller plurilateral groupings which are unlikely to remain stable indefinitely (Mukherjee and Malone 2012).

India does not have the luxury of a set of perfect options for the choices it must make on international issues. Charting a strategic path for India's future, Sunil Khilnani and others recently wrote:

> There are occasional tradeoffs between a single-minded pursuit of national interest and investment in the legitimacy of global institutions. We will have to protect our core national interests. But the world will be watching to see how much we choose to invest in strengthening the legitimacy and authority of international institutions. Handling this altered context will require India to make some wise choices, about where to apportion political capital. (Khilnani et al. 2013: 34)

Opinion regarding India's willingness to demonstrate 'responsibility' in global burden sharing is split. Many are skeptical, and believe that India, like other emerging powers, is clamoring for greater global influence but at the same time opposing the political and economic ground rules of the inherited Western liberal order, challenging existing multilateral arrangements and simultaneously shying away from assuming significant global responsibilities (Patrick 2010). For some the gap between India's ambition for greater inclusion and voice in global institutions in recognition of its emerging prowess, and its insistence on concessions as a developing country is troubling (Narlikar 2013).

At the heart of the debate lie differing conceptions of what constitutes responsible behavior. Articulated by Western observers, responsible behavior is one that recognizes the benefits that India receives from the international order and works towards sustaining that order (Dormandy 2012). The second, articulated by India, suggests that responsibility lies in its domestic realm. India's National Security Advisor, Shiv Shankar Menon says: 'India's primary responsibility is and will remain improving the lives of its own people for the foreseeable future. In other words, India would only be a responsible power if our choices better the lot of our people.'[16] The yardstick of 'responsible behavior' needs to be applied with caution. Standard Western measures, which often simplistically equate responsible behavior with alignment with existing rules and frameworks, are unlikely to find resonance in India. On balance, while India appears to be willing to shoulder global burdens, it seems unlikely to accept any foreign litmus test about whether it is a 'responsible stakeholder' (Patrick and Bhattacharji 2010).

Ultimately, we are quite optimistic. India has come a tremendous way since 1990, both economically and in terms of its international profile and strategies. While perhaps unlikely yet to take significant risks for internationally shared rewards, we believe that it will increasingly act as both stakeholder and shareholder of the system of global governance, both in its institutions and norms, in which it is fated to play a larger role. This would certainly be in its interest.

Notes

1. Indian Council of World Affairs (1957: 185–8).
2. India was offered a permanent seat on the Council in 1955. But that offer, made by the United States and the Soviet Union, was declined by Jawaharlal Nehru, who felt that the

seat should be given to China instead. See Emily Wax and Rama Laxmi, 'Obama Supports Adding India as a Permanent Member of the UN Security Council', *Washington Post*, November 8, 2010.

3. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's Address to the Joint Session of the United States Congress, Washington DC, July 19 2005, available at <http://pmindia.gov.in/speech-details.php?nodeid=145>, accessed December 9, 2013.
4. Krishnan Srinavasan, 'Image with no Definition', *The Telegraph*, January 23, 2013.
5. Rohan Mukherjee, 'Redefining Responsibility', *Pragati*, September 3, 2011.
6. The 'common but differentiated responsibility' principle was adopted at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio and incorporated into the 1997 Kyoto Protocol. It establishes different obligations for developed and developing countries, based on their internal capacities.
7. S. Joshi, 'Jairam Ramesh: India Will Not Accept Legally Binding Emission Cuts', *The Hindu*, November 25, 2010.
8. 'Warsaw Climate Change Talks Falter as EU and Developing Countries Clash', *The Gaurdian*, November 22, 2013.
9. Lavanya Rajamani, 'Halfway between Durban and Paris', *The Indian Express*, November 29, 2013.
10. India's lagging position in the Washington-based International Financial Institutions particularly exercised Indian finance minister P. Chidambaram, who campaigned vigorously and with some success in 2007–8 for a larger voting share.
11. Although it had previously opposed the inclusion of services in trade negotiations, by 2004 India was advocating for the liberalization of trade in services owing to its own service-led growth.
12. United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/60/1: 2005 World Summit Outcome. The principle of R2P embodies three pillars: first, every state has a responsibility to protect its own citizens against genocide, ethnic cleansing, crimes against humanity, and war crimes; second, the international community has the responsibility to build state capacity to prevent mass atrocities in states where it does not exist; and third, the international community has the responsibility to take timely and decisive action, consistent with the UN Charter.
13. See generally, Statement by Ambassador Hardeep Puri, Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations at the General Assembly Plenary Meeting on the Implementation of the Responsibility to Protect, A/63/PV.99, July 24, 2009, <http://www.un.int/india/2009/ind1584.pdf>.
14. For a better understanding of India's evolving positions on the nuclear file, see Kennedy (2011) and Mistry (1998).
15. 'Opposing Global Engagement is Old Line, Out of Touch with Our Interests: PM', *Indian Express*, November 6, 2006.
16. Shiv Shankar Menon, 'India and the Global Scene', Prem Bhatia Memorial Lecture August 11, 2011.

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CHAPTER 43

INDIA AND THE UNITED NATIONS

Or Things Fall Apart

MANU BHAGAVAN

Introduction

This chapter focuses on India's multilateral diplomacy through the prism of the United Nations. Because the UN is such a vast, sweeping organization, with multiple bureaucratic arms, and because virtually every international matter runs through its network of deliberations, decisions, agencies, and programs, this essay of necessity only highlights selected issues, incidents, and policy preferences. But they represent when woven together the broad trends in India's relationship with this defining institution of modern international relations.

India played a key role in the conceptualization of United Nations, helping at the moment of its birth and soon after to mold the organization into one of universal character and appeal. Guided by an intricate plan developed by Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, India leveraged its moral authority to great effect, proactively using the UN's chambers and authority to bridge the rift between the world's superpowers, and to serve as a leading light for reforming global state structures to reduce violence and conflict (Bhagavan 2013).

A small series of missteps and miscalculations, capped off by a physical confrontation in the subcontinent, shattered India's commitment to these ideals. Subsequently, the country adopted what it thought was a more clear-eyed approach, choosing to fight on an issue-by-issue basis. This coincided with the gradual transformation of the UN into a body more responsive to the rich and powerful. India has been far weaker and less effective in this milieu, but an approaching crossroads presents the country with stark choices over the twenty-first century.

India and the Creation of the United Nations

India was central to the creation of the United Nations in three major, interrelated ways. The first had to do with how the UN was conceptualized at its founding. In the second instance, India led efforts against a South African law in one of the UN's first acts, and this result had important repercussions for the UN's powers and understanding of itself. And third, India played a leading role in the development of the Security Council.

The United Nations was originally the official name of the Allied Powers in the Second World War, and was used early in 1942 in a declaration that the principles of the 1941 Atlantic Charter were a blueprint for a post-war world. While the war raged on, the Allies built bureaucracies and institutions, including the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Agency and the Conference on Food and Agriculture, which would eventually develop into arms of the post-war world organization.

As the war neared its end, officials from the Big Three great powers (the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Soviet Union) and China met in 1944 in Dumbarton Oaks in Washington, DC to discuss the future, and there agreed upon a general framework for a new order. Following further high-level discussion, a conference was eventually called in San Francisco in 1945, and countries from around the world invited, to discuss the Dumbarton Oaks proposals and to create the United Nations Organization, a new, global institution that would be at the heart of a sustainable peace, succeeding where the League of Nations failed.

India was invited to this conference, but as it remained under British imperial control, only Crown representatives were to attend. Fate, however, intervened. As it happened, Jawaharlal Nehru's sister, Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, had been in the United States on tour since the end of 1944, the result of interventions by Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt, with the aid of China's Chiangs, and the blessings of Mahatma Gandhi. Pandit had wowed audiences with her rhetorical prowess, her charm, and her sense of style. In just the few months since her arrival, she had become a national celebrity, sealing her status in a well-received radio takedown of Winston Churchill's former Parliamentary Secretary, Robert Boothby, in a debate on the need for Empire.

Pandit spoke eloquently and fiercely for independence for India, but also for a global sense of justice, one that had to address racial inequalities everywhere, including in the United States itself. Her speeches won her acclaim and allies, most notably from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Its leaders, Walter White and W. E. B. DuBois, organized a counter-delegation to San Francisco, to ensure that the voices of the colonized and marginalized were included in whatever new institution emerged. They asked Madame Pandit, as she had become known, to lead this charge, and she accepted.

At San Francisco, Madame Pandit demanded an end to imperialism, in both its overt and covert manifestations. Her most adamant opponent was Churchill himself, who was

resolved to give not an inch on matters related to Britain's Empire. After a terrific joust, Madame Pandit emerged defeated when wording in Chapters XI and XII embedded colonialism in the form of 'trusteeship' into the new UN Charter. The British Foreign Office crowed over its victory, and it seemed in the immediate aftermath that the new organization would essentially be one to maintain the status quo ante. So it came as quite the shock starting about a year later when the Charter was reinterpreted and given standing using precisely the opposite reading of what the British had intended.

Madame Pandit had returned home to India to a hero's welcome. She had rocketed to stratospheric fame in the United States in a very short time, and though she felt bitter about her loss in San Francisco, her brother comforted her that her deeds might yet have consequences unforeseen.

In 1946, South Africa passed what became known as the Ghetto Act, which was premised on racist understandings and in the main relegated people of Indian descent to second-class status. Nehru had taken over the Interim Government in September of that year, and immediately decided to send his sister back to New York to lead India's new delegation to the United Nations. There, Madame Pandit took on the heavy burden of challenging South Africa on its law.

This issue hinged on whether South Africa, as a sovereign state, had the right to produce whatever laws it wished, in accordance with its own internal governance structures. Indian lawyers preparing the case behind the scenes quickly adduced that South Africa would stand or fall on Article 2(7) of the UN Charter, the domestic jurisdiction clause. In essence, the clause restricted the UN from intervening in the internal affairs of states.

After much parliamentary maneuvering, and a series of verbal jabs and parries in various committees, the debate crescendoed with a head-to-head confrontation in the General Assembly, on one side Madame Pandit and on the other General Jan Smuts, South Africa's Prime Minister, founding visionary of the League of Nations, and gentlemanly imperialist. Gandhi remembered Smuts well from his days in South Africa, and considered the man a friend, though the two had sparred many times back then. The Mahatma had given Pandit clear instructions that how she conducted herself at the UN was just as important as any result, and thus civility and respect had to undergird any confrontation.

The two met on the evening of December 7 to press coverage rivaling that of great sporting events; even fashion columns were in on the act. Where Smuts was staid in his delivery, Madame Pandit soared in her oratory and called the Assembly the 'conscience of the world'. She urged her colleagues to elevate all people, and to use the newly formed chamber to send a clear signal that a new day had dawned. The audience responded with thunderous applause, and she (and India) carried the day, winning a two-thirds majority vote marking what was seen as the first 'Asian' or 'non-Western' victory over the imperial powers of the day.

India's victory here was a bit of a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it awoke everyone to the possibility of the new organization to really change the dynamics of international relations and to set a new, global standard for proper conduct. On the

other, as Smuts confided to Pandit in sorrow after her success, the vote contributed to Smut's loss in the next South African election, and the new government took an even firmer stance, remolding the Ghetto Act into apartheid. The South Africa debate revealed the promise and the peril of seeking recourse through the new world organization, and the tensions inherent in the competing visions that lay behind it (Bhagavan 2013: 14–65).

The most immediate after-effect of the South Africa debate, though, was that the General Assembly was established as a center of gravity in the complex bureaucracy of the new organization. As it had been conceived over conversations at Dumbarton Oaks and later by the Big Three heads of state at Yalta, the UN was to have several principal organs, one of which, the Security Council, vested control with the great powers. The Council had only five permanent members, and each of them, and no one else, wielded a veto. Many from the Global South (a term that encompasses the 'East' as well) saw the set-up as imbalanced and unfair, a means to perpetuate Old World politics and keep most countries and peoples under the thumb of a few. That the Security Council was empowered to sanction Member States gave it teeth that no other body was thought to have. A little over a year after the UN was launched, several countries began to chomp at the bit, and Cuba and Australia explicitly called for change. Cuba wanted to call a conference to reorganize the whole institution to give everyone a more equal say; Australia more modestly proposed limiting the veto and allowing its use only under certain conditions.

It was Nehru who personally stepped in, taking advantage of all of the deference granted him as Gandhi's heir and leader of the modern world's first decolonizing country. Nehru drew on his personal recollections of 1919, when US President Woodrow Wilson's proposal for a League of Nations and a new world met with fierce resistance. Nehru correctly assessed that the League failed because the great powers had not properly participated, in some cases not at all. He opposed the Cuban and Australian proposals, explicitly stating that 'India attaches the greatest importance to the continuance of the U.N.O. and to the need of the Great Powers cooperating within it; for that reason, however much she might dislike the use of the "veto" except on very rare and special occasions, she would not support any proposal which might serve to intensify the present tension between the Great Powers or result in the withdrawal of any of them from the United Nations.'[1] Without India's support, the Cuban and Australian proposals died on the vine (Bhagavan 2013: 69).

It is impossible to say what might have happened had history unfolded differently, but given the fate of the League, it seems justifiable to conclude that in defending the Security Council, if with pinched nose, Nehru helped ensure that the UN would not be stillborn. His decision here, though, must be seen as a strategic one, and limited to time and context. The South Africa question revealed that India (/Nehru) was willing to travel another route to address Southern concerns: empowering the General Assembly and making it a place of meaningful action. And indeed, India's Grand Strategy, which began that very same year, aimed to reframe international relations altogether.

The High Water Mark

Just as India was engaging South Africa over the Ghetto Act, and just before it faced down criticism of the Security Council, Nehru laid out an eight-point plan that explained the defining features of the new India's foreign policy. India would uphold peace and freedom, support decolonization, avoid alignment with any one country or bloc, and work assiduously for the eventual attainment of what he called 'One World', the name taken from a book written in the early 1940s by American Republican Wendell Willkie. Nehru was vague in 1946 about what exactly he meant by One World, but over the course of the next two years he fleshed out his vision, one shared by Gandhi and many in the new government as well. Building off of a critique of the nation-state form that he and Gandhi shared, and grounded in a concept of internationalism they developed over the 1930s, Nehru wanted the United Nations to develop into a form of world government, generally based on a global charter of rights and duties, and possibly based upon principles of federalism. One World provided India with an overarching strategic objective, a grand one, and illuminated a course of action, even if the precise means of reaching the destination were by no means clear.

With a broad plan in place of what they were hoping to achieve—nothing less than the refashioning of the global political sphere—India made numerous tactical choices meant to further their goals. Carefully executed, India enjoyed striking success in several key areas over the course of the late 1940s and 1950s, what we might call the high water mark of India's multilateral efforts. Most notable among India's achievements in this period were its maneuvers to decolonize the UN itself, its well-received leadership in the crafting of key human rights instruments, its heralded diplomatic efforts to ease world tensions and encourage peace, and the rise of one of its own to global leadership.

'India' had been involved in the United Nations even in its wartime incarnation, inasmuch as the Crown government brought the country into the war and, in turn, voted to support various institutions created to deal with the challenges wrought by the conflict. Among the most prominent of these was the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Agency (UNRRA), the mission of which was to aid countries negatively impacted by the military campaigns. The British Government of India awarded UNRRA a budget of 80 crores of rupees in 1943, even while one of the worst famines ever encountered was hitting the eastern state of Bengal. But Nehru's interim government rejected a second funding request by overturning an earlier approval from their colonial predecessor. Nehru argued that India itself had been affected by the war, and was in fact sheltering many refugees. Since funds were not to be redirected his way, he decided that a statement had to be sent and he terminated the second payment. India's stance magnified other problems that UNRRA was facing and the organization was shut down soon thereafter. A new organization soon rose in its place, the International Refugee Organization, which Nehru immediately endorsed while assiduously stating that budgeting had to be fair to impoverished countries like his own. The UNRRA encounter thus exemplified India's efforts to challenge and undo great power/Global North/Western control of UN

bureaucracies from the outset, and to reset both the tone and the substance of international relations by insisting on shared responsibilities and mutual respect (Bhagavan forthcoming).

On the heels of its efforts to recalibrate UNRRA and to challenge South Africa, India took a seat on the newly forming Commission on Human Rights, which was chaired by former US First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt. Many saw the commission and its purview as the cornerstone of the new international edifice. The Assistant Secretary-General for Social Affairs, Henri Laugier, in inaugurating the new body, argued that the South Africa debate ensured that no one could hide human rights violations behind state sovereignty any longer.

India's representative was respected feminist Hansa Mehta, who faced a difficult test. As the Human Rights Commission began its work in 1947, the Cold War was setting in, and frosty conversation and icy stares became the norm. Mehta was sensitive to these conditions, and deft at forging somewhat warm ties across the spectrum. She initially proposed a framework to grant further powers to the General Assembly, but this was quickly shot down by Nehru, who again warned her not to undermine the Security Council so directly, for fear that the entire edifice might collapse like a house of cards. With that in mind, she chaired a working group on implementation that laid out a number of steps to give human rights teeth. Virtually every one of these ideas has since been adopted, if in somewhat modified manner. Sitting also on the Fundamental Rights Sub-Committee of the Indian Constituent Assembly, Mehta also saw to it that what went into the Universal Declaration was also incorporated into the new Indian constitution, part of a larger scheme to domesticate international norms globally to increase their rigor and respectability (Bhagavan 2013: 65–74, 84, 102–4).[2]

But Mehta's biggest role came a few years later when the principles of the UDHR were further developed into enforceable law through covenant. By the 1950s, the animosity between the United States and the Soviet Union and the alliances they controlled had grown severe, and all action was discolored by mistrust. The Soviet Union, in line with much of the Global South, believed that economic, social, and cultural rights were key to universal justice, while the Americans tended to favor civil and political liberties. The United States was not actually opposed to the concept of economic rights, but suspicions on each side made sensible negotiation impossible. India believed strongly in both notions of rights.

The Commission went back and forth on whether there should be one or two covenants of rights, and eventually settled on one. But in 1951 Mehta argued that in fact the split reflected a real difference in conception, genealogy, and justiciability, and therefore that there had to be two covenants, which in conversation with one another would embed the idea of difference into human rights, and make respect for the 'other' part of the concept. India then played a leading role in ensuring that the covenant was split into two (Bhagavan 2013: 105–13).

India's role in creating a positive atmosphere was recognized and rewarded over the next two years. Just prior to Mehta's actions in the Commission, Robert Oppenheimer, one of the creators of the atom bomb, reached out to Nehru through his sister, then

India's ambassador to Washington, DC. Nehru had become a friend and ally of Albert Einstein, one of Oppenheimer's colleagues, and the two shared the One World vision. Oppenheimer confided that terrible super-weapons were being developed and pleaded with Nehru, whom he believed to be the only person alive with the stature and authority to act, to thwart such efforts and literally save the planet (Sahgal 2011: 40–2).[3]

Oppenheimer's plea came in the midst of the Cold War's first major hot conflict: the Korean War. India from the outset had tried to play peacemaker, signaling that the Chinese should not be singled out for aggression, and, in an echo of Gandhi's earlier wartime actions, sending an ambulance unit rather than troops. In 1952, it perceived an opening in the conflict. The head of its UN delegation, Krishna Menon, and allies from Africa and Asia, helped to negotiate a settlement, quickly adopted by the UN General Assembly and the foundation of the armistice that has held to this day (Malone 2011: 252; Thakur 2013: 273–98; Kochanek 1980: 49–50). India followed up quickly by generating in 1953 a Disarmament Sub-committee through the General Assembly, to provide a forum to address concerns highlighted by Oppenheimer's communiqué, and to further an aim that Gandhi and Nehru had clearly stated as early as the 1942 Quit India Declaration (Prashad 2007: 42; Chacko 2012: 42). And then, on top of this, India committed a heavy presence to UN peacekeeping operations in the Middle East, Congo, and Cyprus (Kochanek 1980: 50).

India's soaring reputation and clout were emphatically underscored later that year when it put Madame Pandit up for President of the General Assembly, at the time considered one of the most substantive and important positions in the world. She had by then scaled to new heights, heralded by the US press as both beautiful and brilliant, and 'the first woman' in each consecutive post she held. She smashed glass ceilings again when she won the election in secret ballot, supported by the Commonwealth, the United States, and the Soviet Union (Bhagavan 2013: 113–16).

In 1955, the United States and the Soviet Union separately broached the possibility of India taking a permanent seat on the Security Council. While each superpower was no doubt trying to woo India to its own side, and outplay the other, the fact that both agreed to this in principle was a testament to India's ability to jointly embrace the feuding countries as members of one family. True to form, though, Nehru did not pursue the offer, as he knew that altering the Council in this way would require altering the Charter, and that this move in the Cold War's climate risked the very existence of the United Nations (Nehru 2001: 231).[4]

Regardless, the entire exchange represented India's status as global rainmaker. The sky seemed the limit to India's potential on the global stage.

The Turn of the Tide

Despite the renown, recognition, and respect that India received, the international ground on which it stood proved to be made of shifting sand. Several events occurred that undermined India's stance and moral legitimacy.

The issue with the most long-standing repercussions was Kashmir, which became a critical issue right at the outset in 1947. It was India that brought the issue of Kashmir before the Security Council on January 1, 1948, and the UN followed through with several resolutions over the course of two years that tried to create circumstances conducive to resolution. Such closure of course never occurred, with India and Pakistan bickering over interpretation of the resolutions, and India quickly changed its mind about brooking outside 'interference' in the matter. It subsequently used the Soviet Union's veto as a shield and in the late 1960s and early 1970s turned to the language of 'internal affairs' and 'bilateral negotiations' to further push out the international community. Kashmir thus became a proverbial sore thumb, sticking out from the rest of India's multilateral approach, and its overall relationship with the United Nations, and has subjected the country ever since to criticism and allegations of rank hypocrisy (Ganguly 1998: 11, 47, 121, 142, 164, 166).

Still, the veneer of Gandhi, and of Nehru in his own right as well, gave India a level of Teflon protection, and such charges rarely stuck enough to cause damage, at least in the first decade of independence. India took a more serious hit, though, when in 1956 it botched the handling of twin Cold War crises. Egypt's Gamal Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal, provoking a military response from Great Britain, Israel, and other Western powers. At nearly the same moment, the Soviet Union invaded Hungary. While Nehru was working with US President Eisenhower to halt the incursion into Egypt, he had little information as to what was going on inside the Eastern bloc country, and hesitated to act. In an infamous blunder, Krishna Menon then delivered a caustic speech in the UN, decrying Western actions in the Suez while arguing that Hungary represented a matter internal to the Soviet Union. Staffers immediately informed Nehru that India's objectives were threatened by such double standards. Recovering from his initial flat-footed response, Nehru sprung to action and publicly linked the two issues, condemning both. But it was too late and Yudhisthira's feet touched the ground. India's failure in this moment damaged its heretofore sterling reputation as honest broker and non-aligned champion of peace. Nehru still maintained an aura of regal invincibility, but he was mortal now and blood was in the water (Bhagavan 2013: 121–4).

The deathblow came some years later when China invaded India. Krishna Menon, now Defense Minister, was caught unawares and Chinese forces marched in practically at will. The ostensible reason for the attack had to do with a disputed border. Nehru, who had always seen the Chinese as allies, believed the whole thing a misunderstanding and referred the dispute to the UN, which eventually came back in favor of India's position. But the border was cover for other issues: Tibet and India's sanctuary for the Dalai Lama; military action in Goa to kick out the Portuguese and bombastic threats subsequently directed at China by Krishna Menon; and domestic concerns in China from which Mao Zedong needed a diversion.[5]

In any event, Nehru's grand hopes for the world collapsed with the attack, and he sank into despair, lamenting that India had been living in a 'world of illusion' (Mukherjee 2010: 253). In his final year of life, he oversaw a constitutional amendment that ensured that India would privilege state sovereignty and territorial integrity from then on.

Things Fall Apart

The most immediate and transparent change in India's policy came on Kashmir. Though the fate of the Princely State and India's reluctance to defer to the UN on the matter had raised eyebrows, by and large the world community gave India a pass, and saw its contortions in the 1950s as unfortunate if understandable. In 1965, though, India opted to make a clean break, ordering its Foreign Secretary to walk out of a Security Council debate on the matter 'as a cautiously calculated, deliberately planned gesture meant to drive it home to all concerned that the United Nations does not matter as much as it did earlier' (an Indian diplomat, quoted in Kochanek 1980: 53).

India's new approach was a fundamental rejection of everything it had worked towards and stood for since the creation of the Interim Government. No more was India driven by a broad concern for the welfare of humanity, and the development of a universalist, supra-sovereign institution. Instead, it decided that national self-interest was paramount. This did not necessarily mean a retreat from international affairs, but it did represent a turn away from internationalism.

Indira Gandhi adopted a muscular stance, concluding that the lesson of the Sino-Indian war was that the world only answered to shows of force. And so her landmark achievement was the rallying of international public opinion in the lead-up to the Bangladesh war of 1971 (Raghavan 2013: 223–31; Yunus 2011). Rather than the UN, an alliance with the Soviet Union lay at the center of the strategy. The 'Iron Lady' also opposed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, and in 1974 oversaw the detonation of India's first nuclear device. India's internal problems, especially related to poverty and starvation (despite the Green Revolution), and the eventual imposition of the Emergency, further eroded international faith in its good intentions (Kochanek 1980: 52–7). Rather than standing above the Cold War, enjoining both combatants in warm embrace, India now appeared a weasely supplicant to each.

The Western press reacted harshly to India's suspensions of democratic norms in 1975, and their rebukes had an effect. Mrs. Gandhi felt the weight of international opinion rallied against her, and recognizing once again the critical importance of multilateralism, in 1976 tried to reassert a position in the United Nations (Kochanek 1980: 54–9; Guha 2007: 515–18; Jayakar 1992: 236).[6] Gone though was any guiding principle of world government. India now saw the UN for what it was, not what it could be: a forum for rational and irrational nation-state actors to debate, offer propaganda, ally, fight, and otherwise head off dramatic physical confrontations.

If there was no grand strategy, there were in its place limited strategic aims. In a two-year term on the Security Council from 1977–9, India continued its long-standing campaign against apartheid in South Africa, and championed the cause of Palestinian peoples, the latter part of a broader effort to reach out to parts of the Muslim world so as not to be outmaneuvered by Pakistan.

Generally, though, since the late 1970s India has been inconsistent in the UN. It supported decolonization even as it opposed (or abstained from commenting on) sensitive

resolutions on Puerto Rico and Korea. It has advocated disarmament even as it has built up its military. It has talked up human rights even as it has obfuscated on Kashmir (Kochanek 1980).

Moreover, just as India chose to re-enter the fray at the UN, if in revised fashion, in the late 1970s, the United States, out of Cold War logic, had begun a major effort to shift the center of gravity in the United Nations away from the General Assembly and to the Security Council. By the 1980s, the UN was at its nadir, weakened by two decades of decline, with the General Assembly reduced to a debating chamber and the Security Council puffed up into a site of great power machinations and an ever-expanding US grip on power (Prashad 2012: 6, 114; Mazower 2012; 330–432).

The Sound and the Fury

The United Nations was marginalized as a result of these changes, proving ineffective in conflicts ranging from Yugoslavia to Rwanda. Since the 1990s, it is often seen, not incorrectly, as a front for United States-driven policies.

India has continued to flail about in the UN, its highly trained, if self-congratulatory, diplomats expressing a misguided satisfaction with small victories while being blind to India's utter failure to achieve anything of substance in the forum. This is best illustrated by the fact that India's main goal since the 1980s has been a permanent seat on the Security Council, on which India has served more than any other country save for three other non-permanent members and the Big Five. A permanent seat, nonetheless, is an objective that India appears no closer towards today than it did then, dog bones and patronizing head pats from the United States notwithstanding.

The collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s meant that India was now bereft of its primary ally, even as simmering tensions in Kashmir were boiling over, and concerted efforts were underway to involve the international community in the conflict. India initially saw acquiring veto power in the Security Council as essential to its national interest, if only as a means to keep everyone else out of its affairs (cf. Raja Mohan 2013: 4). But this new vision coincided with changing domestic and international political and economic dynamics. In the mid-1980s, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi had begun easing long-standing restrictions on the Indian economy, a process known as liberalization, which then took off in the early 1990s under the guidance of then Finance Minister Manmohan Singh. Free market practices and privatization fed a globalized middle class interested in material acquisition and the projection of might. This resonated in international media coverage roaring about the new Asian Tiger, which in turn was further amplified by a detonation at Pokhran signaling India's entry into the world's elite club of nuclear powers. India embraced a narrative of exceptionalism, newfound money and muscle feeding a self-conception of itself as a place of unique destiny, a great power reclaiming its rightful place at the High Table.[7] It now *deserved* that permanent seat, in recognition of its status and significance.

India's international playbook at the UN since has been essentially built around a notion of muscular moralism: it continues to talk in high-minded fashion, while incessantly building up its own power and shielding itself from any inquiry or interference. Ethical principles such as peace and justice, which had undergirded all that India did and achieved in its early years, are now mere tactical tools in a quest for fame and fortune. Nowhere is this change more apparent than in India's contributions to UN peacekeeping.

Stemming in measure from its imperial heritage, troops spread across the globe in an effort to maintain the order of the Empire, India has since just after its independence contributed over 100,000 personnel, as well as additional human and material support assets, to UN peacekeeping operations.Support for such contributions flagged in the 1970s and 1980s, but picked up pace again in the late 1990s, so much so that India is now widely considered the backbone of international peacekeeping (Gowan and Singh 2013: 177, 183). But whereas first phase deployments were linked to the strategic aim of One World, now the goal is much more simple: the projection of military might (Gowan and Singh 2013: 178). And for the Indian Ministry of External Affairs, assuming global responsibilities bolstered India's claim to permanent member status on the Security Council.[8]

To this end, India took a seat on the Council in 2011–2, after last serving in 1991–2. The return was meant to highlight how far India has come, and underscore that a permanent position was all but inevitable. Instead, India offered platitudes about respecting sovereignty (Kashmir ever lurking behind the thin veil) and further sought out as many soapboxes as possible to sermonize and moralize anyone within earshot. In an eventful year marked by major conflicts in Libya and Syria, India, like its overall UN policy, appeared 'confused' (Mukherjee and Malone 2013: 113).

The Once and Future King?

Yet global crises and possible catastrophe caused by climate change have caused a new wind to blow, though it is yet to be seen if it has enough force to be one of change. The global war on terror, health pandemics, and the emergence of the panopticon state have made classic appeals to state sovereignty seem quaint and out of touch. Inspired leadership from Kofi Annan began a process of reforming and revitalizing the United Nations, with a reimagined internationalism at its heart, manifested in the ideals of the Responsibility to Protect, and the creation of the loosely affiliated but independent International Criminal Court. Other idealists have been pushing for the addition of weighted voting schemes, and even a world parliament.

None of this is uncontested of course. Some see R2P and the ICC, for instance, serving Western interests and furthering rather than resisting the great power imperialism that has marked the modern United Nations.

India for its part finds itself at the center of many of these storms, at great risk from global warming/weirding even as it remains a heavy carbon emitter; suffering from terrorism even as it breeds caustic, xenophobic religious nationalisms; and producing life-saving, cheap medicines even as its own unhealthy infrastructures threaten the lives of millions. Yet, it continues to deal with these and all other issues on an ad hoc basis, and no discernible grand strategy seems to exist. Big questions remain. Does India want to be a great power? What would it seek to do as a permanent member on the Security Council? And are there alternatives? Might re-empowering the General Assembly be part of any reimagining? Can Camelot be recalled, and the United Nations live up to the dream of its founders as an engine for peace and justice, able to rise above imperialist plotting and nationalist rivalries, or will that incarnation for evermore be recalled as but a fairy tale?

Notes

1. Letter to Australian High Commissioner to India, Iven Mackay, October 30, 1946, Nehru (1984: 461).
2. Nehru similarly rejected the 1950 Acheson 'Uniting for Peace' plan, which would have empowered the General Assembly to act when the Security Council could not, seeing this plan as threatening the forced great power engagement in the Council and an overall threat to the delicate balance of power that kept the UN functioning. Malone (2011: 252).
3. Oppenheimer phone call to Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit and Top Secret letter to Nehru.
4. Record of Minutes of meeting between Nehru and Soviet premier Nikolai Bulganin.
5. On these first two points, and the broader issues of Suez, Hungary, and China, see Bhagavan (2013: 121–9). On this final point, see Jun (2005); and also <http://zeenews.india.com/news/nation/mao-ordered-1962-war-to-regain-cpc-control-chinese-strategist_806153.html>, accessed June 3, 2014. I thank my colleague Tansen Sen for his assistance with some of this material.
6. I am grateful to my student Sean McManamon for excellent observations on this point.
7. The metaphor of the 'High Table' is the basis for Malone (2011: ch. 11).
8. Raja Mohan (2013: 1). Another issue highlighting India's muscular moralism, and its turn away from Nehruvian internationalism, has been its rejection of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons starting in 1968, and its sibling the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty in the 1990s. Ostensibly, India maintained such positions in the name of 'fairness', but its own nuclear ambitions made its holier-than-thou posturing seem even more shallow. While India thought it was in the midst of a graceful ballet, its lead-footed diplomacy stepped on many toes, and it was shocked to lose an election to the Security Council to Japan in the late 1990s. See Malone and Mukherjee (2013: 159–64). Cf. Mukherjee and Malone (2013).

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CHAPTER 44

INDIA AND THE INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

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EVERY fall, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank Group[1] convene annual meetings, usually in Washington, DC, where both institutions are headquartered.[2] The occasion brings together central bankers and ministers of finance and development, along with leading private sector executives and academics, to discuss the global economic outlook, assess financial market conditions, and review progress toward goals in development and poverty reduction. Unlike the opening of a UN General Assembly session in New York (on which they follow) the Fund–Bank conclaves typically do not make for dramatic headlines. Since 2000 they have become rallying occasions for activists representing various anti-globalization, environmental, human rights, and social justice causes, but the theater emanates from the rabble, not the rostrum.

Thus, when Indian finance minister P. Chidambaram spoke at the 2013 meetings in his capacity as Governor of the Fund and Bank for India, it may not have made for must-see TV. But the bespectacled veteran of several high offices in India was clearly annoyed, and he did not mince words. His remarks said much about India's frequently fraught relations with the international financial institutions (IFIs), and indeed much about the unsteady state of global economic governance in the early twenty-first century.

In the initial wake of the 2007–8 global financial crisis, India and other rising powers quite reasonably had hoped to see a significant enlargement of their voting and 'voice' shares in the governance of the IFIs. Though briefly set back by the crisis, the Indian economy had quickly recovered, spurred by a shift in global investment away from the advanced economies. India posted better than 7 per cent GDP growth for 2009–10, and nearly 8 per cent growth for the decade 2002–11. But by mid-2013, the prospect of significant reform of the IFIs now seemed to be dimming. However glacial its pace, recovery in the advanced economies was gradually easing perceptions of

urgency on the part of political leaders to advance multilateral reforms. A reversion to business as usual was becoming the new 'new normal'.

In India, meanwhile, a worrisome growth slowdown—with a general election looming in 2014—made complacency hard to countenance. India faced mounting inflation, fiscal and trade deficits, stemming from rising oil and commodity prices alongside the domestic political compulsion to maintain subsidies for food, fertilizer, fuel, and power. In mid-2013, GDP growth had dipped below 5 per cent and the rupee was falling fast, losing 12 per cent of its value in August alone. There was even speculation in the press that India might be heading for an IMF loan (Bhattacharya 2013), a recourse last taken during a severe balance of payments crisis in 1991 that catalyzed India's far-reaching, if incremental, liberalization. Though the domestic and international contexts were different now, the outgoing Governor of the Reserve Bank of India surely was not alone in asking, 'Does history repeat itself? As if we learn nothing from one crisis to another?' (Subbarao 2013). Such was the baggage that India's representatives carried to Washington in October 2013.

Chidambaram began his remarks with a brief review of developments in global financial markets. 'The growth prospects in many emerging market economies, which have been the main drivers of global growth, have been impacted by the recent financial market developments triggered by the likely exit from the unconventional monetary policies in advanced economies', he cautioned. 'Central banks in advanced economies need to take into account the spillover effects on the global economy of their potential exit from these policies' (Chidambaram 2013). At issue was the anticipated tapering of asset buying by the US Federal Reserve, and other forms of quantitative easing (QE) deployed by the European Central Bank, the Bank of England, and the Bank of Japan in the wake of the 2007–8 crisis. 'Emerging market economies', Chidambaram conceded, did 'need to strengthen their domestic fundamentals, strengthen the reserves and implement structural reform in growth critical areas'.

But the minister's sharpest criticism was reserved for the IMF. He challenged the Fund's recent downward revision of India's growth estimate, to under 4 per cent (Mehdudia 2013). He pointed out that the Fund's past growth projections had been wrong, and called for a review of its methodology. 'The IMF's failure to identify certain risks and give clear warnings has demonstrated yet again the weakness of its surveillance framework', he said. 'It also questions the relevance and usefulness of the IMF exercise with regard to policy settings of member countries, because repeated downward revisions could significantly influence market expectations besides spreading gloom.' In other words, pessimism could be self-fulfilling: IMF surveillance, rather than encouraging stability, risked making a bad situation worse for India.

Then came the main irritant in India's relations with the multilateral lenders. Formal governance in the IMF and World Bank, Chidambaram complained, was grossly imbalanced: country-wise vote allocations—weighted according to financial contributions—did not reflect the true stake and contribution of India and other emerging markets in the twenty-first century global economy. Three years after the 2010 launch of a high-level dialogue on Quota and Governance Reform, there was 'still no clarity'

about when this would be achieved. Chidambaram expressed India's 'disappointment' and said further dithering would damage the 'credibility, legitimacy and effectiveness' of the institutions. He concluded, 'Reform of these institutions, in keeping with the times, is long overdue. Only a reformed World Bank and International Monetary Fund will reflect correctly the expectations and aspirations of the world as it is today.'

Another year, another Indian criticism of the international financial institutions? To be sure, India has had a historically complicated relationship with the global economy, the international financial system, and its key multilateral institutions. Even so, there have been significant shifts in Indian perceptions of the global economy—and in global perceptions of India and other emerging markets—in the wake of the 2007–8 crisis. From the earlier Latin American crisis of the early 1980s to the East Asian crisis of the late 1990s, a mainstream view had come to perceive systemic risk as something that typically emanated from institutionally weaker developing countries and obligated periodic remedy from the advanced economies, with the IFIs as (mostly unloved) intermediaries. The Bretton Woods lenders, and especially the IMF, were widely assailed for their responses in those crises. (In the case of the Asian crisis, a former World Bank chief economist famously blamed IMF policies for bringing the world 'to the verge of a global meltdown' and criticized both the Fund's encouragement of 'excessively rapid financial and capital market liberalization' in the first place; Stiglitz 2002: 89). But they were, for better or worse, the institutions on hand for coordinating multilateral crisis response and encouraging countries to reform.

India avoided contagion in the 1997–8 crisis, and many analysts attributed its minimal exposure to its more limited liberalization of its capital account. A decade later (and on the verge of the next crisis), the then RBI Governor wrote a column for the IMF's quarterly magazine explaining India's 'gradual, cautious approach that has been carefully phased and sequenced across the economy' (Reddy 2007). In the aftermath of the Asian crisis, India had seen a vindication of its gradualism; following the 2007–8 crisis, its position had garnered a broader legitimacy verging on moral authority.

The most recent crisis has upended inherited assumptions. This time, it was flawed financial instruments and indefensible fiscal practices in the United States and Europe that created alarming systemic weaknesses. The major emerging markets, with accumulated reserves after years of strong economic growth, were in a new position to make significant contributions to the international crisis response. Over several high-profile summits of the G-20, upgraded to Leader level since 2008, India joined other rising powers in calling for a significant expansion in the capitalization of the multilateral lenders to contain the crisis, prepare for the next one, and respond to the needs of the world's poorest and most vulnerable. The capitalization campaign was more successful for the Fund than for the Bank ('Forgotten Sibling', 2009). But as America's malaise dragged on and a deepening debt crisis gripped the 17-nation Eurozone, even the Fund's seemingly renewed relevance—one recent academic study called it a 'phoenix rising' (Joyce 2012)—risked curdling into an instrumentalization that served the needs of the more advanced economies, without giving a significantly larger role to developing countries in the institution's governance, after all.

Not only did economic growth in China, India, and other emerging economies lead global recovery after 2009, but in 2012 these countries also offered significant sums to shore up the IMF response to the European crisis, with China pledging US$43 billion, India, Brazil, Mexico, and Russia $10 billion each, and South Africa, Turkey, Malaysia, and others additional sums toward the $430 billion emergency fund. From India's perspective, especially, this offer made both economic and strategic sense. One academic analyst (and contributor to this volume), optimistically suggested, 'As India's power as a donor and global actor rises, it will increasingly be able to influence global economic and governance structures. Pledging $10 billion unlikely to be drawn in exchange for tweaking the global financial system in its favour is money well promised' (Mullen 2012). But, foxhole conversions to multilateral reform back in 2010 notwithstanding, it was always going to be difficult politically to get the advanced economies to hand over expanded voting privileges to the rising rest (especially in the United States, where a presidential election loomed in 2012, and partisan gridlock in the Congress has persisted thereafter).

Seven decades after their creation, the IMF and World Bank in many respects appear as needed as ever: the near freeze in global liquidity at the peak of the 2007–8 crisis demonstrated that there are still roles for the big, public sector multilateral lenders. But there remains that nettlesome issue of representation. Together, the renewed practical interest in the operations of the IFIs and the recent 'rise' of India make this an especially interesting juncture for examining relations between them. For while India was a founding member of the IFIs, and its political elites long have seen it as a leading member as well, in reality its ability to *intentionally* exert influence over them (as distinct from offering them formative experiences that would inevitably influence their wider operations) has not always lived up to its self-image. In the twenty-first century, that disconnect may be ending, and India's influence in the IFIs may harmonize with the expectations of its leaders and the aspirations of its people. But there is nothing inevitable about such an outcome, at least in the near term. A diminished sense of post-crisis urgency among the advanced economies, in conjunction with a slowdown in Indian economic growth, could conspire to squander the opportunity to advance significant reforms in the IFIs. We will return to this context below. But let us first consider history.

From Bretton Woods to the Globalization Era

The IMF and World Bank are often called the 'Bretton Woods twins'. John Maynard Keynes, a chief midwife at the 44-country UN Monetary and Financial Conference (in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire) that birthed the siblings in July 1944, once referred to them as 'Master Fund' and 'Miss Bank' (Subramanian 2011). As this remark suggested,

the 'twins' are not identical. The remark also carried an interesting assignment of gender roles, given the reputations that the siblings would acquire: the Fund as the leaner and perhaps meaner of the two, more narrowly focused on macroeconomic imperatives, the Bank as the more nurturing promoter of development and poverty reduction, its softer and more domestic focus encompassing infrastructure, investment, social sector promotion and state capacity-building.

A leading textbook on international organizations introduces the two IFIs in this way:

> The two international financial institutions created after World War II provide a similar service to countries but in very different contexts and for different purposes. Both pool the resources of their members and use that capital to fund lending to members in need. The IMF can only lend to countries with immediate balance of payments problems. It makes short-term loans of foreign currencies that the borrowing country must use to finance the stabilization of its own currency or monetary system. As a precondition to the loan, the Fund generally requires that the borrower change its policies in ways that enable future monetary stability. The World Bank makes longer-term loans for specific projects related to development or poverty reduction. Most Bank loans are tied to a particular project undertaken by the borrowing government. (Hurd 2011: 66)

The economy of this (entirely serviceable) explanation belies the major evolution both institutions have undergone since their founding, as well as the oft-complicated relations between them. International monetary relations under the original 'Bretton Woods system' meant the maintenance of fixed exchange rates tying national currencies to the US dollar, backed by its convertibility into gold at an official rate. All this would change dramatically in the early 1970s, when the 'Nixon shock' ended fixed dollar–gold convertibility and brought on the era of floating exchange rates, fundamentally altering the role of the IMF (which had to be re-envisioned, even to the point of amending its Articles of Agreement). By decade's end, the Thatcher and Reagan revolutions signaled an ascendant market fundamentalism that would convert the IFIs into proselytizers for trade liberalization, privatization of state-owned enterprises, deregulation of labor markets, and opening up to foreign investment. In the 1980s and 1990s, the 'globalizing' IMF and World Bank sought to encourage challenged borrowers to adopt often far-reaching policy changes, encompassing shorter-term 'stabilization' and longer-term 'structural adjustment' measures. Critics of the IFIs so successfully appropriated the latter term to describe an entire edifice of coerced 'neoliberalism' that in the early 2000s the World Bank quietly changed the name of the signature financial instrument from Structural Adjustment Loan (SAL) to Development Policy Loan (DPL).

But in 1944, all that lay far in the future. As Ngaire Woods explains, 'These public sector institutions were created not to feed global markets but to step in where markets fail and mitigate the harsh effects of global capitalism' (Woods 2006: 1–2). At Bretton Woods, generally shared commitments and above all a concern for economic stability set the tone. The United States and Britain exerted the most influence (though, through the figures of US treasury official Harry Dexter White and the formidable Lord Keynes,

not always imperfect harmony). India, soon to be independent, was an essentially autonomous participant at the conference. Its active if 'prenatal' participation at the 1944 conference was—and remains—central to a self-perception as a leading governor and stakeholder in the IFIs, and not simply a borrower and supplicant. Keynes was polite enough not to include India among a group of 21 other developing country participants that he derided as 'the most monstrous monkey-house assembled for years', who had 'nothing to contribute' and would 'merely encumber the ground' (Steil 2013: 189–90).

Two examples serve to illustrate India's early importance in the IFIs; both relate to the perennial issue of representation. When the Soviet Union declined to join the new institutions after attending the conference, India became one of only five countries—along with the United States, Britain, France, and nationalist China—originally holding the privilege of appointing an Executive Director (ED) to the Executive Boards of the institutions. (There are also elected EDs, who represent regional groups rather than single countries.) Somewhat like ambassadors, EDs are dispatched to Washington where they meet routinely to vote on loan proposals and major policy decisions. India later lost its ED appointment privileges—it was edged out by a rehabilitated Japan in the early 1970s—but it has retained its 'own' Fund and Bank directors since it appoints the director for its regional group (the other members are Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Sri Lanka). India's seat at the high table has been a distinctive, ongoing feature of its relations with the IFIs (in contrast to its lack of a permanent seat on the UN Security Council, for example).

India also pressed successfully for the Bank's Articles of Agreement to include a reference to the needs of the 'less developed countries', and to give 'due regard' in 'fair representation to the nationals of member countries' among the Bank's professional staff (though the developed countries added the caveat that staffing would be 'subject to the paramount importance of securing the highest standards of efficiency and technical competence', and avoided any such commitment to representation in staffing the IMF).[3] Indian economists have figured prominently on the staffs of both IFIs—some in very senior positions, and often shuffling back and forth from important offices in Indian government. While some critics have seen in this revolving door a kind of neoimperialist infiltration of the Indian state, a less sinister view sees influence as plausibly running in both directions.[4] By 1971, India contributed more nationals to the Bank's professional staff than any other developing country, behind only the United States, Britain, France, and West Germany. Since the 1990s, as the Bank has decentralized operations, its New Delhi offices have grown to employ about 250 staff, of which 70 per cent are professionals (mainly economists) and 80 per cent are Indian nationals.

The World Bank is officially the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), and post-war reconstruction was the major preoccupation behind its establishment at Bretton Woods. When America's Marshall Plan encroached on that turf, the IBRD became more squarely focused on development and poverty alleviation. While the Bank is mandated to maintain an apolitical orientation, American policies and prerogatives inevitably continued to shape its evolution even as it became the leading multilateral institution in the development sphere. It was headquartered in Washington (along with the Fund, just a stone's throw from the White House and US treasury), and the United States nominates

its presidents (by tradition, all have been Americans, while Europeans have led the IMF), an increasingly contentious practice. Washington's successful candidate for the World Bank in 2012, Jim Yong Kim, was challenged by strong Nigerian and Colombian contenders, while a viable Indian, Montek Singh Ahluwalia, was frequently mentioned in corridor discussions as a potential candidate. All of these offered stronger formal credentials to lead one of the IFIs than did Dr. Kim.

India, for its part, would come to occupy a central role in the Cold War drama of a 'third world'. India's great size and geographic setting made it objectively important to both superpowers, and its combination of constitutional democracy and central planning allowed both to see something of their own images reflected back at them when they regarded the post-independence pageantry of India's political economy.

The international political context inevitably influenced the World Bank's regard for India. Assessing four decades' worth of Bank–India relations from the view of the mid-1990s, one staff member told journalist Catherine Caufield that 'for years, during the Cold War, India held a special position as the largest nonaligned democracy'. This led Caufield to wager, 'As greater and greater sums of money passed between them, the Bank succeeded in putting its imprint on India, but India's imprint on the Bank is just as deep' (1996: 23). This echoed an earlier assessment by the authors of an official World Bank history, who wrote, 'It is no exaggeration to say that India has influenced the Bank as much as the Bank has influenced India' (Mason and Asher 1973: 675).

To take one key example, it was largely to meet India's expanding needs that the Bank spawned a new lending facility, the International Development Association (IDA), in 1960 for concessional development assistance at lower cost than IBRD loans. (Whereas IBRD lending is essentially financed by bond issuance, albeit backed by callable capital subscriptions from member countries, concessionary IDA assistance is mainly funded by triennial replenishments from donor governments.)

From the 1940s into 1960s, India and the Bank grew up together. However, as India struggled through wars with China and Pakistan, and as inflation, drought, and dependency on foreign food aid exposed weaknesses in its centrally planned development model, the Aid India Consortium (a group of creditor countries led by the United States) grew more critical of Indian policies. In 1966, the Consortium put pressure on the new Indira Gandhi government to adopt a major devaluation of the rupee, along with reforms in trade and agriculture, as conditionality for emergency loans. The World Bank (and, to a lesser extent, the IMF) was directly involved in these negotiations, which anticipated the lenders' structural adjustment programs of the 1980s and 1990s with other borrowers. In this, significantly, Indian experience was more broadly formative for the IFIs, and especially for the Bank. When the devaluation proved politically explosive, Mrs. Gandhi aborted the broader liberalization (Mukherji 2000). For years afterward, the Bank retreated from major policy conditionality in India (Zanini 2001), expanding its lending dramatically as Mrs. Gandhi sloganeered to 'Abolish Poverty' (*Garibi Hatao*).

In 1981, amid another anticipated crisis, the IMF lent India the unprecedented sum of 5 billion Special Drawing Rights (SDR, the Fund 'currency') over a three-year period. This time, the policy conditionality was essentially homegrown by Indian

officials, the final loan installment was never drawn, and India repaid ahead of schedule. Interestingly, 'Indian policymakers did not view securing a major loan from the IMF as a sign of weakness, but [rather] as a validation of India's importance in the global economy' (Chaudhry et al. 2004: 64).[5]

Throughout the 1980s, even as the IFIs embarked on their 'decade of structural adjustment' elsewhere, India enjoyed a deferment from major conditionality—until the severe balance of payments crisis in 1991 that led to its stabilization and structural adjustment loans from the IFIs. The liberalization program of 1991 was a watershed, but even as Indian leaders embraced a fundamental rethinking of the country's relationship to the global economy, they have still sought to defend domestic prerogatives. Policy programs and development projects supported by loans from the IFIs can become lightning rods for controversy relating to perceived external coercion. (This is not unique to relations between the IFIs and India, of course.)

Probably the most infamous project loan in World Bank history is one that the lender initially supported in India—but ultimately pulled out of—involving a major infrastructure works on the Narmada River. The Sardar Sarovar Dam and Irrigation Project encompassed a principal dam, 30 other major dams, and a network of smaller ones spanning the Narmada and its tributaries across the states of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Gujarat. Though touted for hydropower, irrigation, and drinking water benefits, the project required the resettlement of an uncertain—but certainly massive—number of people. When this displacement commenced in the late 1980s and early 1990s under appalling conditions, Indian and transnational activists mounted a campaign that compelled the United States, Japan, and ultimately the Bank itself to terminate lending for the project. An independent commission that reviewed the project for the Bank, headed by former US congressman and UN official Bradford Morse, issued a report in 1992 that documented multiple problems with the project's resettlement process and environmental impact (Morse 1992). The controversy was a searing experience for India and the Bank, and it led to the establishment of an independent Inspection Panel in 1993 to review complaints from people affected by Bank projects. India continued the project without Bank assistance.

As the Bank's lending became laden with safeguards to mitigate adverse impacts, India and other large borrowers increasingly looked to private capital markets for financing major infrastructure works. Even so, the contraction of private capital flows amid the 2007–8 crisis made clear just how useful the World Bank still was. In 2008–9, the Bank's board approved $8.14 billion in new loans for India—more than double the average volume for pre-crisis years.

Crisis, Reform, and the BRICS Alternative

The G-20 began in 1999 as a forum for 20 finance ministers and central bank governors (from 19 countries plus the EU) and was transformed by the 2007–8 crisis

into a series of summits, largely supplanting the G-8 as the main economic council of the major economies. Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh hailed the 'genuine dialogue' at the G-20's Washington Summit in late 2008, and by 2010 India and other emerging powers had advanced the long-standing issue of 'voice reform' in the IFIs, resulting in modestly revised vote shares allocations. India now holds a 2.63 per cent vote share in the IMF, compared to China's 6.01, Russia's 2.56, and Brazil's 2.22 per cent; the United States still leads with 16.47 per cent. World Bank vote shares are slightly different, with India now holding 2.91 per cent, China 4.42 per cent, and the United States 15.85 per cent. (For decisions requiring an 85 per cent supermajority, the United States has veto power, and given the preference for 'consensual' decision-making rather than overtly contentious votes, this is an existential veto that doesn't have to be exercised formally in order to be influential.)

Over BRICS protests, the IMF in 2011 selected yet another European, France's Christine Lagarde, as its head following the resignation of the disgraced Dominique Strauss-Kahn, a Western stitch-up that may prove hard to replicate in the future given the 2012 wrangling over the World Bank presidency, noted above. But while emerging powers have pressed for greater representation in the institutions and stand together in opposition to the Western powers' residual controlling influence, it is not clear how far their agreement will go in advancing alternative arrangements (especially given competitive dimensions in the India–China relationship).

Emerging market solidarity is undergoing a major test over a proposal for a new 'BRICS Bank' that would extend credit in local currency for trade, infrastructure, and project financing, presenting an alternative to the World Bank and existing regional development banks such as the Asian Development Bank (which lends to India, and which Japan tends to lead). Its establishment was to have been the signature achievement of the March 2012 BRICS Summit in New Delhi, but the five leaderships could not agree on terms (Yardley 2012). In September 2013, BRICS announced plans to capitalize a 'forex reserve pool' at the level of $100 billion, with China contributing the lion's share at $41 billion, India, Brazil, and Russia contributing $18 billion each, and South Africa $5 billion. The facility is supposed to be up by 2015, though difficult details remain to be worked out, including the allocation of vote shares.

Two World Bank Windows for 'Two Indias'

As noted above, the World Bank has two public sector lending windows: IBRD, which now lends mainly to middle-income countries, and IDA, dedicated to low-income countries. Observers increasingly speak of 'two Indias', as well—for while India as a whole transitions to middle-income status, as many as one-third of the global poor (living on less than $2 per day) are Indian, according to World Bank estimates. While there are significant numbers of poor all across India, the per capita income gap between

India's richest and poorest has widened to roughly five-to-one, and inevitably the issue of lending for continued poverty reduction has taken the World Bank into complex issues in Indian federalism and intergovernmental relations.

Beginning in the late 1990s, the Bank developed lending programs for fiscal policy, power sector, and governance reforms in several Indian states, including Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Orissa (now Odisha), and Uttar Pradesh (UP). This subnational selectivity, actively encouraged by India's central government, was premised on the notion that reformist 'focus states' would see improved fiscal indicators and development outcomes, leading other states to emulate their policies. (Middle-income Andhra and especially Karnataka were both seen as relatively dynamic states with tech-savvy leadership; Orissa and especially UP had more troubled reputations.) But within a few years, and before the verdict had come in regarding the focus states strategy, the widening income gap across states became a renewed concern for the central leadership, leading the Bank to rebrand its subnational selectivity around a new concern for 'lagging states' and an attendant effort to direct lending toward this low-income group (and toward poorer districts of middle- and high-income states).

The present dilemma is that India's aggregate transition from low- to middle-income status implies that the country should 'graduate' out of eligibility for IDA's soft loans. If graduated, India would remain eligible only for IBRD loans, at interest rates and maturities roughly comparable to commercial loans (but with more of a 'hassle factor' in complying with World Bank lending safeguards). The upshot is that low-income Indian states such as UP—more populous than IDA-eligible Nigeria—would no longer have access to concessionary development assistance. As Devesh Kapur observes, 'There is undoubtedly a structural problem facing IDA. With more than three-fourths of the world's poor now living in middle-income countries, there is a growing disconnect between poor countries and the countries where the majority of the world's poor live' (Kapur 2012).

Indian officials, not necessarily wanting to emphasize India's residual poverty, had been reluctant to press the impending graduation issue during triennial IDA replenishment talks. But their views on the matter are evolving. In 2011, India reportedly agreed to graduate out of IDA but then reversed course, 'arguing that although on average India is a lower middle-income country with a per capita income above the IDA cut-off, it still has hundreds of millions of poor people' (Kapur 2012).

A major reform of the IDA allocation and graduation policy would require innovative thinking by several parties: the World Bank, donor countries, and the proud borrower itself. Indian leaders would have to muster the political courage to articulate a new kind of great power identity—one that embraces the lagging states challenge as a defining task for a great civilization in the new millennium. By more actively pursuing continued IDA access for India's poorest states, New Delhi could encourage new thinking about the multilateral development assistance regime more generally—thus contributing to the expanded role in global governance that it seeks for itself. Enlightened self-interest doubling as principled advocacy for other developing countries: what could be a more distinctively Indian contribution (Kirk 2010b)?

At the end of the sixteenth IDA replenishment (IDA-16) in December 2013, IDA staff successfully advanced a proposal to designate India as a 'transitional' IDA borrower (IDA Resource Mobilization Department 2013). Though India has been a 'blend' IDA–IBRD borrower for many years (largely because its sheer size and absorptive capacity would leave no IDA money for others if its access were not limited), this has always been a somewhat tenuous arrangement. Following a review of IDA's graduation policy, the proposed 'transitional' designation maintains India's IDA eligibility through the next three-year cycle (IDA-17, to 2016). The World Bank will establish a task force 'to provide advice to countries in their move to blend and eventually IBRD-only status', and though the new arrangement could benefit other potential IDA graduates, the proposal is manifestly about and for India.

The unprecedented arrangement is yet another demonstration of how India exerts existential influence in the IFIs. Other countries have been graduated from IDA, but none has been as important to the Bank's overall portfolio, reputation, and self-image. As the IDA staff paper notes, 'India's graduation from IDA is a testament to the progress that India has made ... by halving the population of people living on less than US$1.25. Nevertheless, India remains home to one-third of the world's poor and is expected to need access to transitional support from IDA after graduation.' The IDA staff proposal had the firm—if strategically measured—support of India's Executive Director for the World Bank, and therefore of the finance ministry itself.[6] Although it is a significant step, it is at best a stopgap response to the conceptual problem of an IDA that risks disengagement from a huge share of the global poor; realistically, there will still be hundreds of millions of poor people in India beyond 2016.

India and the Bretton Woods Institutions at 70

A gloomy summer's hangover dogged the Indian economic team's October 2013 trip to Washington. Duvvuri Subbarao, before stepping down as the country's top central banker, had wondered aloud whether history might be repeating itself—whether 2013 might be remembered alongside 1991 (and 1981 and 1966 before it) as a year when India faltered from its vaunted ideal of self-reliance and had to reach out to the international financial institutions for help in a crisis.

But the very day after Chidambaram's frosty remarks at the annual meetings, Subbarao's successor sounded a very different note. In a televised conversation from Washington, the new RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan said, 'There's no way we are close to being a country in financial or economic crisis ... There's not a chance we will go to the IMF for money in the next five years.' India had more than sufficient foreign exchange reserves, he said, and 'If push comes to shove, we can pay the world in gold' (Press Trust of India 2013). The remark did not imply any anti-IMF stigma: from 2003 to 2006, Rajan was the Fund's chief

economist. The reader will be in a position to judge the accuracy of his forecast, but it is worth noting than Rajan is hardly a Pollyanna: in 2005, more than two years before the global financial crisis, the former University of Chicago professor had warned of a possible 'catastrophic meltdown' (Rajan 2005).

India's relations with the IFIs are imbued with an intriguing ambivalence. Long an outspoken member, of late its assertiveness has been bolstered by genuine self-confidence. Seeking still greater influence, India has been a vigorous advocate for voting and voice reform in the governance of the IMF and World Bank. The long shadow of India's colonial experience and the controversial external pressure in past decades to alter its economic policies, continue to inform the high symbolism that Indians attach to relations with the IFIs. Despite the past history of economic sermonizing by rich countries, in an interdependent world, there can be little *Schadenfreude* in seeing America and Europe struggle through recent crises rooted in their own unsound policies, as the knock-on effects for India (compounded by India's own policy mistakes) were dire.

In many ways, post-independence India and the Bretton Woods twins have grown up together. Though the institutions have undergone many changes since their birth in 1944, their rules reflect the political relationships of the past more than the economic realities of the present. Especially after the 2008 global financial crisis, it has become glaringly evident that India and other emerging powers are exasperated at the continuing control that America and Europe exert in the institutions. But with the United States, in particular, unwilling to cede its privileged position, a shared lurching from crisis to crisis may be the realistically expected road to reform. It remains to be seen whether India and other ascendant stakeholders will be able to articulate a new collective vision for global economic governance comparable to the consensus, however imperfect, that emerged at Bretton Woods seven decades ago.

Notes

1. The World Bank Group comprises two main public sector lending institutions: the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), founded in 1944; and the International Development Association (IDA), in 1960. Conventionally, 'the World Bank' refers to IBRD and IDA (originally, it was a nickname for the early IBRD, coined by *The Economist* magazine). There are three additional constituents of the Group: the International Finance Corporation (IFC), which makes private sector loans; the International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes; and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency. This chapter looks at India's relations with IBRD and IDA.
2. By tradition, for two consecutive years out of every three, the annual meetings are held in Washington, DC; in the third year, the meetings are held in another member country. The first such conference was held in London in 1947, the year of India's independence. In 1958, the meetings took place in New Delhi, the only time India has hosted.
3. See Kapur et al. (1997: 60); see also Mason and Asher (1973: 31).
4. For a fuller discussion, see Kirk (2010a: Introduction).

5. While there is no single-volume overview of India–IMF relations, there are excellent discussions throughout two authoritative IMF histories; see Boughton (2001, 2012).
6. Author's personal correspondence with the World Bank Executive Director (EDS-12) for Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Sri Lanka; December 2012 and March 2013.

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CHAPTER 45

INDIA'S CONTEMPORARY PLURILATERALISM

SAMIR SARAN

MULTILATERALISM in the twenty-first century and in the Indian context has new nuances. The old impulses of aggregating nations on the basis of ideologies or overarching political objectives as was the case with the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), and economic realities as of the 1960s and 1970s exemplified by groupings such as the Group of 77 (G-77), are giving way to a newer rationale of aggregation. Most twentieth-century groupings of which India was a part, were envisioned as fundamentally anti-establishment or counter-establishment. They are now veritable relics of a post-colonial era, left with little by way of common identity, political character or economic circumstance.

The New Plurilateralism

Today, India seeks space for economic growth, investments for its infrastructure, energy for its prosperity, and a multitude of social services for its people. Above all, it needs a stable neighbourhood and peace in the extended region and beyond to allow for a sustained period of growth and consolidation. This chapter argues that in order to achieve these objectives, India has shaped and become a member of multiple mini-multilateral groupings, which are perhaps more in the nature of clubs. This new approach to multilateralism can best be described as 'plurilateralism'. Some of these groupings are: BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa), IBSA (India, Brazil, South Africa), BASIC (Brazil, South Africa, India, China), RIC (Russia, India, China), SCO (The Shanghai Cooperation Organization), and the Group of Twenty (G-20). India is perhaps, 'just another member' in some of these geopolitical and geoeconomic initiatives, such as the East Asia Summit and the G-20; whereas in some others, it forms a pivot, as is the case in groupings such as BRICS, IBSA, RIC, and BASIC.

Each of the new groupings is invariably representative of a common characteristic—that of significant coincidences of the political or economic interests of their member countries. These 'clubs of coincidences' are giving weight to Indian positions on issues such as climate change, trade, economic governance, and regional integration and additionally in some niche areas such as South–South and maritime cooperation. However, within this discourse, there exists a distinct break from the motivations of multilateralism in the twentieth century. This chapter argues that unlike in the past, its current plurilateral engagements essentially serve to position India firmly within the established order and in some instances at the global high table on governance.

Three key factors relevant to this chapter may be worth mentioning here. The first is that, as India participates in these myriad plurilateral formats, it must carry along its domestic constituency and seek its buy-in on this new narrative of cooperation. In many ways, groupings such as BRICS, IBSA, and RIC, which are discussed in detail here, help explain this evolving discourse to domestic stakeholders. Second, as India becomes part of the establishment, it will need to negotiate its own weight and role within them. These new groupings inherently facilitate this process as they carry collective bargaining power. And finally, these groupings also act as a bridge between India's old avatars of NAM and G-77 and its new role as an emerging power. As India's positions shift on key political and economic questions, this evolution can be explained better to its erstwhile partners through its participation in these groupings.

Without this new plurilateralism, India will struggle to negotiate any of the above. Unlike narratives which pitch BRICS, IBSA, and RIC as anti-Western, this chapter argues that these groupings help place India firmly within the established order of global management and provide a flexible architecture for its diplomacy. Increasingly, India's foreign policy will be driven by needs and not choice. These needs include economic growth and domestic imperatives like skills development, jobs, and education for its population. India's temporal and spatial preferences for a particular plurilateral forum will be driven by these domestic compulsions. The attraction of such groupings as opposed to the larger multilateral ones is clear. They are flexible enough to allow the country to continue to be a member without fear of recrimination even if it disagrees with other members on certain issues.

BRICS: Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa

BRICS seems to have garnered the most attention among the new plurilateral groupings. An acronym coined by Goldman Sachs in the early 2000s, BRIC at the time was conceived as a list of some of the most profitable investment destinations. This is not to be confused, however, with the genesis of the BRIC grouping, which was a political

process, initially led by Russia. With the entry of South Africa into the grouping in 2011, BRIC became BRICS, with an enlarged geographical reach (Saran et al. 2013).

BRICS now represents over 26 per cent of the global landmass, 43 per cent of its population, 20 per cent of global GDP, and 18 per cent of the market capitalization of the world's stock exchanges (Viswanathan and Unnikrishnan 2012: 17). Additionally, the five member countries have been responsible for around half of the growth in global GDP in the recent past (Viswanathan and Unnikrishnan 2012: 17). As of 2013, BRICS nations represent almost 3 billion people, with a combined nominal GDP of US$14.8 trillion and an estimated US$4 trillion in combined foreign reserves.Though the BRICS nations are mostly newly industrialized, they are distinguished by their large, rapidly-growing economies and noteworthy influence on regional and global affairs. Therefore, as the global power balance has changed, the attention on BRICS has increased significantly.

While starting off as an informal grouping based primarily on geopolitical and geo-economic considerations in an evolving multi-polar world, BRICS today takes up a broad array of issues. These range from enhanced economic cooperation to political coordination. According to the *Long Term Vision for BRICS*, a submission by the Indian Track II Community to the BRICS Academic Forum held in 2013, there are five primary thematic underpinnings to cooperation at the level of the BRICS platform. These include: reform of global political and economic governance institutions; multilateral leverage; furthering market integration; institution of a robust intra-BRICS development platform; and sharing of indigenous knowledge and development experiences across key sectors (Saran et al. 2013: 3–5).

A grouping of nations with common interests and objectives, the collective also shields any individual country from criticisms when projecting interests that may be opposed to the status quo. India has made it clear that it did not join the BRICS to oppose others, but to progressively rebalance the global economy and enable a broader distribution of power (*The Economic Times* 2013a). This is amply reflected in the annual declarations of BRICS Heads of States (Viswanthan and Unnikrishnan 2012: 18). BRICS' geographic canvas includes Africa, Latin America, and a large portion of Asia. This has lent BRICS commensurate political credence since the UN Security Council (UNSC) lacks permanent representation of these important regions, Chinese permanent membership notwithstanding.

India is still an emerging power and its engagements via plurilateral forums like BRICS enable it to both punch above its weight and create alternatives to a larger multilateral canvas. Therefore, the importance of BRICS for India in matters of global political and economic governance lies in the fact that the collective bargaining power of BRICS allows India to amplify expression of its views on the inequities and imbalances in the global system. While highlighting the centrality of the United Nations and its various bodies in matters of global governance, India and other BRICS members have consistently voiced strong views on the structural deficiencies in this system. Therefore, even as BRICS seeks reforms in the international framework, India is able to better negotiate its own role in international institutions.

India's foreign policy goals converging within the evolving BRICS agenda include: gradual strengthening of its negotiating positions on issues such as security; development; trade; climate change; and ensuring equity with traditional centres of power in managing the global economy. It would be important for India that BRICS become a more cohesive conclave of economic outperformers who shoulder significant responsibility.

This willingness to shoulder responsibility can be seen in two new developments. The first is the BRICS 'New Development Bank' (NDB), which was announced in July 2014 at Fortaleza, Brazil. The establishment of this bank that will support infrastructure projects and social development initiatives in emerging and developing countries was conceived at the New Delhi BRICS Summit in 2012. In a short span of two years, the BRICS member countries were able to overcome initial differences, agree to a 'one-country one-vote' governance structure, select the location of the NDB headquarters, and agree on its presidency. With an initial subscribed capital of US$50 billion and an initial authorized capital of US$100 billion (Government of Brazil 2014) the NDB can influence the conduct of global infrastructure and development finance comprehensively. The second development is the creation of the BRICS Contingency Reserve Arrangement (CRA) worth US$100 billion (Government of the People's Republic of China 2014). This arrangement will provide a hedge against monetary fluctuations and currency runs for the emerging and developing countries.

Other concrete mechanisms which have been put in place within the intra-BRICS development and market integration framework include the 'Master Agreement in Extending Credit Facility in Local Currencies', the 'Multilateral Letter Of Credit Confirmation Facility Agreement', and the 'BRICS Exchange Alliance'.

In the absence of a permanent seat in the UNSC, BRICS also provides India a viable platform to formulate collective political agendas; respond to the dominance and assertiveness of the traditional powers in solving international security issues; and create a new coordinated approach to decision-making on the international rules-based governance system. Also, since the work of the UNSC—which has been charged with the responsibility of securing peace and stability—is undertaken in a closed club format (see Gharekhan 2006), excluded countries like India increasingly feel the need for enabling greater inclusion. BRICS provides a platform to demand this vociferously.

A crucial component of intra-BRICS cooperation is the vast potential for sharing development knowledge and technological transfers. Sectors which BRICS countries are already cooperating on within this overarching focus area include energy, information technology, urbanization, and research and development in healthcare.

The limitation of BRICS is obvious. The grouping represents different economies at different stages of progress with varied political regimes in place. As a result, while India gets some of what it wants from this platform, its larger geopolitical ambitions remain as yet unrealized owing to the grouping's inability to find a truly coherent strategic voice. This also leads to the question: will intensified economic integration lead to greater geopolitical coordination? For example, given the different growth trajectories and social

emphases of each of the member countries, will they ever agree on a climate regime? Will China accept or champion India's permanent membership of the UNSC based on intensified economic cooperation? The answers to both these questions offer an interesting insight into the importance of BRICS. While Russia may never agree to a climate regime, under BRICS it might. Similarly, China might never support India's candidature for a UNSC seat bilaterally, but under the ambit of BRICS, it might, and therein lies the inherent importance of the BRICS grouping. In the short term, however, it is important to look at BRICS through two separate lenses—economic and geopolitical—even as its member countries seek to navigate an increasingly complex, sometimes fragmented, multi-polar world.

IBSA: India, Brazil, and South Africa

The IBSA Dialogue Forum (or 'IBSA') is a trilateral cooperation initiative of India, Brazil, and South Africa. Its primary aim is to galvanize South–South cooperation. This international forum seeks to generate greater understanding between the developing countries of Africa, Asia, and South America facing similar challenges. The uniqueness of IBSA is that the countries share remarkably similar political dispensations (as well as a basic market-orientation within their economies). They are all developing, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, and multi-religious nations, exhibiting many elements of commonality underpinned by a convergent normative outlook. In fact, the then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh stressed these shared values in his address to the IBSA Summit in 2011: 'Our grouping derives its strength and global influence from the fact that it consists of three major developing democracies located in three continents. We share the principles of pluralism, democracy, tolerance and multiculturalism.'

The idea of creating an institutional framework for cooperation on South–South issues was first discussed between the Prime Minister of India and the then Presidents of Brazil and South Africa in Evian, France in June 2003 on the margins of the G-8 Summit (Government of India 2013). Following the trilateral consultations, the foreign ministers of the countries met in Brasilia on 6 June 2003. This historic meeting launched the IBSA Dialogue Forum that was formalized through the adoption of the landmark 'Brasilia Declaration' (IBSA 2013).

There are three main elements of cooperation within the IBSA platform (Government of India 2013). First, it is a forum for consultation and coordination on global and regional political issues, such as the reform of the global institutions of political and economic governance, the WTO Doha Development Agenda, climate change, and terrorism. The second element is trilateral collaboration on concrete areas through 14 working groups and six people-to-people forums. The third element is assisting other developing countries, particularly the Least Developed Countries, by initiating projects through the joint IBSA Trust Fund in various development sectors.

As an alternative to the North–South relationship, IBSA member countries seek to create a new South–South framework for development. The South–South framework is premised on mutual benefit. Unlike the North–South donor–recipient paradigm, South–South cooperation seeks to reframe the interactions among developing countries on issues such as trade, investment, and development assistance. Indeed, increased cooperation between developing countries is underpinned by the fact that the share of GDP of the North as a proportion of global GDP has decreased from close to 80 per cent in 1990 to about 60 per cent in 2012 (Sharan and Kumar 2013: 2).

It is useful to note that South–South cooperation in all three areas—trade, investment and development cooperation—has been on the upswing. South-South exports accounted for around a quarter of global exports in 2011, nearly doubling from that in 2001 (Sharan and Kumar 2013: 2). The proportion of outward foreign direct investment (FDI) (as per cent of GDP) originating from developing countries has also risen from a modest 0.02 per cent to over 2 per cent over the last four decades (Sharan and Kumar 2013: 3). Similarly, much of the slack in development assistance flows due to the reduced ability and willingness of the North to disburse finances to the South following the global financial crisis has been made up for by the South.

IBSA is more ideologically, politically, and socio-economically homogeneous than BRICS. India views IBSA as having enormous potential in terms of formulating a South-centric development agenda. IBSA countries also believe that they are 'natural candidates' for permanent seats at the UNSC and support each other on this issue politically. IBSA support also provides an alternative avenue that bypasses South Africa's decision to abide by African Union guidelines, which prevents it from unilaterally fielding its own candidacy at the UNSC (Arkhangelskaya 2011: 6).

IBSA has been modestly successful in promoting South–South cooperation within multilateral forums. In intra-IBSA trade matters, the forum has been, at best, a qualified success. Intra-grouping trade has grown significantly with the establishment of IBSA. For example, India's imports from Brazil and South Africa have grown at 35 per cent and 22 per cent respectively from 2007 to 2012, while exports over the same period have grown by 18 per cent and 12 per cent respectively (for more details, see Government of South Africa 2013). However, it would be hard to argue that this upswing is a result of institutionalized cooperation under IBSA, particularly in the light of the failure of the IBSA countries to formally conclude a proposed trilateral trade agreement (Woolfrey 2013: 4).

More than anything else, perhaps India's support to this plurilateral forum signals a commitment to a model of development underpinned by the notion of participatory democracy in the formulation of public policies and a 'rights-based approach' to public service delivery. Globally, IBSA is about bringing innovation and cooperation to South–South dialogue and strengthening the autonomy of developing countries in relation to the traditional powers. 'Development with democracy' could well be the slogan for IBSA (Waisbich 2013).

An added attraction for India is that not only is decision-making simpler compared to other South–South forums like the G-77 because it involves fewer countries

(Gupta 2008), but also that their agreements highlight India's positive diplomacy. It also projects India's attempts at articulating a more diversified foreign policy and reaching out to regions beyond its immediate neighbourhood. For example, IBSA played an important role in building a consensus at the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) in favour of an India-specific waiver allowing India to participate in civilian nuclear commerce (Gupta 2008). It has been the political congruity among the three countries that helped overcome latent disaffection with India's nuclear position (Spektor 2013).

The real challenge for IBSA though is to see if the natural affinities that diverse, liberal democracies have for each other can translate into political and economic outcomes or if this group will be limited to normative advocacy. There are of course positive signs—notably the collaborative maritime exercises IBSAMAR. South Africa, for instance, is very clear about the final objective of these exercises: 'the aim of the exercise was to increase interoperability, testing supportability, and enhance military and diplomatic understanding and cooperation among the three nations' (Rakoma 2010). Obviously, this alludes to greater tangible cooperation between the three countries. The achievement of such end goals could be one of the enduring legacies of this South–South grouping.

However, IBSA is in real danger of being cannibalized by the BRICS as Brazil and South Africa seem more attracted to the larger club (Kasturi 2013). In fact, the IBSA summit in 2013 scheduled to be held in India did not take place ostensibly because of 'scheduling issues', with no new dates announced as yet. This could be due to India's 2014 national elections or indicate a lack of interest and raises a question whether the IBSA Summit in 2012 was the last stand-alone leaders' meeting. There is some discussion that the IBSA summits could henceforth be held on the sidelines of BRICS summits, which would surely be the death-knell for the group's profile and credibility.

RIC: Russia, India, and China

China, Russia, and India span two continents, link three oceans, and represent 40 per cent of global population as well as over 22 per cent of the globe's territorial surface. The Russia–India–China (RIC) grouping is perhaps an underestimated strategic concept. Intuitively, however, this may seem an improbable troika. Despite recent progress, the long-standing bitterness in Sino-Indian ties and between China and Soviet Russia, do challenge the very basis of this grouping. India and China have hesitatingly embarked on a partnership largely driven by economics with a degree of comfort also exhibited in matters of global governance. However, it can be argued that any further economic integration and acceleration of trade relations will always be subject to the temper and mood of the political relationship. On the other hand, India and Russia (from Soviet times) share a significant strategic comfort level and defence relations but the degree of economic cooperation beyond defence and strategic technology sectors is limited.

The tyranny of geography ensures that even resource trade is sparse and access to each other's market is cumbersome.

RIC provides an optimal context for the three member countries to collectively look at the bigger picture, and affords opportunities to ease some of the bilateral roadblocks besides offering a unique forum for discussing regional and global affairs. Therefore, to understand the relevance of RIC, a few central vectors of enquiry, among others, suggest themselves. Can a degree of RIC integration help towards creating a robust energy grid and common market over time? Will this offer a fillip to the Russia–India economic engagement? Can the RIC help overcome the political inertia that frequently overwhelms Sino-India trade ties? And, does this forum offer an efficient platform for the three countries to discuss regional issues that affect stability and peace? If the answers to these questions are in the affirmative, RIC may well be an indispensable forum for India to realize its strategic and economic ambitions in an interconnected Asia.

Prior to his visit to China in October 2013, the Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh stated that 'India and China have historical issues and there are areas of concern' (*The Economic Times* 2013b). This was a fairly unambiguous reference to the border tensions between the two countries. RIC is a forum which provides India with the opportunity to move beyond this complex issue towards a paradigm of enhanced trade and commerce flows across the Indian, Chinese, and Russian borders. Bilaterally, this would be politically and economically impossible. Under the ambit of RIC, both Beijing and New Delhi have the room to manoeuvre. From India's perspective, cooperation at RIC can yield a large market in the form of its neighbours to the north and will open up a new route for inflow of energy and other natural resources for its economic and industrial growth.

Indeed all RIC members are faced with the important issue of developing their own economies and maintaining their shared borders—China in fact has common borders with both India and Russia. All three countries stick to non-alliance and non-confrontation as a normative framework (Kundu 2012). Yet perhaps nothing is more concrete than enhanced economic ties. There has been a steep rise in India's exports to both China and Russia from 2008 to 2012.

India has the most important stake in this trilateral relationship and must articulate its regional foreign and economic policies accordingly. Since India is committed to building a new international political and economic order in Asia, it is clear that RIC provides the most efficient instrument in the most strategic sense to achieve this.

A Russia–India–China axis was actively advocated by Russian President Yeltsin in 1993 and then by Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov in 1996. From the Indian perspective, even after the end of the Cold War and India's transformed relationship with the United States, Russia has proved to be a valuable partner. The China–India relationship similarly became more meaningful in the 1980s and after India's economic liberalization as both the nations gained economic momentum. Moreover, with the international environment becoming more complex, the imperative for coordinating political and economic strategy (or at least sharing views frankly on major geostrategic and geoeconomic challenges) in the region is much more compelling.

The need to gain better understanding among the three nations and establish a strategic partnership that would benefit the world is increasingly evident (Xinhuanet 2013). Strengthening strategic coordination among the three countries will also add an important guarantee to Asia's peace and stability. The 12th trilateral meeting held in New Delhi in November 2013 focused RIC cooperation on various aspects. Notable among them was to increase strategic trust, deepening pragmatic cooperation, and building the Silk Road economic corridor and Asia–European Continental Bridge (Xinhuanet 2013).

Although groups spanning multiple geographic and economic vectors like the East Asia Summit, BRICS, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization have emerged, it would not be correct to assume any of these could diminish the gains that could be achieved for the three Asian giants through RIC. The trilateral is unique and important in that for India there is the convergence of geography, foreign policy philosophy, and economic ascent within the group (Udayakumar 2010). There is also a strong incumbent need for India to aggressively pursue greater cooperation with Russia and China in relation to its own UNSC candidacy. Since Russia and China are at best ambiguous about the practicalities of reform of the UNSC (Burges 2011), the burden falls upon India to agitate more vigorously within the RIC and inculcate more trust in two partners who can block its aspirations.

The three countries are nuclear powers with significant interests in the Eurasian and Asia-Pacific strategic spaces (Udayakumar 2010). All of them are in favour of coordinated mechanisms to counter terrorism and extremism; all of them adopted the same approach to conflict resolution in Syria; in the case of Iran, all of them argue for a diplomatic resolution; and in the case of Afghanistan, the three countries share a common vision of a stable polity in the war-torn country after the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) pulled out (Mahapatra 2013). Though the leaders of RIC criticize North Korea, at the same time they have opposed any new sanctions against the country, and advocate a peaceful solution through six-party talks.

India and China are two of the largest consumers of energy while Russia offers one of the largest energy surpluses. In the global gas market, by 2030 China is projected to consume 13 trillion cubic feet of gas while India is projected to consume 3.4 trillion cubic feet according to figures from the US Energy Information Administration (2013a). At the same time, Russia's natural gas production is expected to be around 29 trillion cubic feet, while Central Asia is expected to produce around 9 trillion cubic feet (US EIA 2013). It is not hard to infer that the three countries should discuss an Asian gas grid. Further, there are opportunities for the three countries to explore cooperation in key economic sectors including agriculture, manufacturing, defence, and some high-end services.

Within RIC of course there are a number of strategic considerations at play. India's wariness over closer China–Russia ties makes this an important forum to calibrate trilateral cooperation as far as possible. Given Russian fears of Chinese monopsony (however real or imagined such a fear may be), Russia sees India as a critical demographic and economic counterweight to China within the grouping and more widely, and an important market to diversify its exports. For India, Russia serves as a significant strategic counter-balance to China and the best possible hope of breaking the China–Pakistan

axis through shared goals. For India, this forum is probably the biggest play in its regional security agenda. And indeed this forum must be central to the reimagining of Asia on its own terms rather than through a 'Western' prism.

Conclusion

Universalism and internationalism marked Indian foreign policy in the 1950s and 1960s under Prime Minister Nehru (Raja Mohan 2013). But India, in that era, taking into account its newly independent status, had to adopt primarily inward-looking policies focused upon nation building with a strong element of territorial sovereignty and economic development (Bava 2009: 16). India's idealistic orientation during the Nehru period, and espousal of Western norms like universalism was eventually taken over by realpolitik concerns and trod a more careful and protectionist approach. India's foreign policy was noted for associating with NAM and keeping a measured distance from the major power blocs.

In the 1970s and 1980s, India moved from the idealist Nehruvian approach to a more realist stance vis-à-vis multilateralism. India's internationalism took a backseat in being less liberal while its posturing was more fervent and radical under Indira Gandhi. In the mid-1980s, Rajiv Gandhi was enthusiastic in his participation at the Six-Nation Five-Continent Peace Initiative (or the 'Delhi Six'), campaigning for an end to nuclear testing and weaponization or militarization of outer space. He was also active in his involvement against the apartheid regime in South Africa and significantly contributed to its abolition. But his efforts to revive NAM met with little success. India in this period saw a renewed interest in regionalism and integration with Asian regional institutions. The period was marked by a steady and careful approach to rejuvenate India's multilateral diplomacy before more meaningful changes were deployed in 1991 in the form of economic liberalization, which would ultimately open up the Indian economy to greater international interaction.

After the Cold War, thanks to globalization and increased interdependence, India began to take part in more plurilateral and multilateral initiatives. In the new millennium, India has emerged as an economic power. This period saw increased and deeper partnerships with both developed and emerging countries. It also saw reinvigoration of ties with traditional economic partners. India now participates in the NAM and G-77 in a strictly pro-forma manner. It displays much greater energy and enthusiasm when it engages with smaller plurilaterals.

India is undergoing a moment of organic transformation. There is palpable change underway in the character of India's foreign policy. The coincidence of the organic and the external are shaping India's engagements. Among the many transitions over the last decade or so, there are three in particular that stand out:

1. Transition from global opposition to global agenda setter: In theory, this movement should be relatively simple and linear. However, reality is troublesome. India,

on joining the established order, would have to meet expectations of incumbent powers. This would mean a tacit acceptance of some prevailing norms, standards, and rules followed by the established order. It would also mean that domestic pressures would have to be navigated deftly, since there would be definite disruptions to business as usual, sometimes leading to local resentments and contestation. This is where India's role within the BRICS may prove pivotal in enabling broad-based support for being part of the global community as a rule maker. Instruments such as the NDB and the CRA are a manifestation of Indian willingness to underwrite the cost of leadership. Forums such as BRICS allow India domestic latitude in accepting new responsibilities even while presenting them as a continuum.

2. Transition from eschewing value-based frameworks: India, in the past, has been accused of espousing value systems such as democracy internally, but hesitating to advocate them overseas. A large part of this aversion to value-laden advocacy is due to the centrality of sovereignty in international affairs, following from its own experiences with colonial subjugation. However, more recently, forums such as IBSA have in a sense been manifestations of the primacy of values. IBSA is an affirmation of India's having shed its inherent reluctance and moving towards value-based diplomacy. This concert of democracies has also allowed India to expand its military footprint and given it a basis for offering financial assistance to countries far beyond its economic interests and geographic proximity. This club, in the end, is helping India shape its own unique value-based external engagement framework.
3. Transition towards seeking a politically and economically integrated Asia: Never before has the Indian economy been so integrated globally as it is today. Moreover, India's trade with the South now exceeds that with the North. In these circumstances, India has to constantly find ways to access new markets, resources, and capital. It is seeking access to the neighbourhood and beyond and is finding it within itself to shed the inhibitions that had created rigid boundaries and borders and excluded engagement and movement in its vicinity. A quasi or fully functional Asian Union, which is at least supported by Moscow, Beijing, and New Delhi and links Central and South Asia, is essential for Indian stability and prosperity. An Indian century can only be a subset of an Asian century, which in turn is predicated on a new architecture shaped by Russia, India, China, Japan, the EU and the United States. RIC is therefore the primordial body which could lead to a political Asia, connected through roads, rail, seas, man, material, and ideas.

India's foreign policy posture increasingly resembles that of established world powers, where certain normative principles and economic interests shape a more robust global engagement and integration. Even as this overarching narrative unfolds, India will need some of these new clubs to navigate the domestic and international hurdles that abound. Plurilateralism seen through this prism is now a means not only for India to assume its chair at the global high table on key debates with some other emerging nations, but is

also the crucial instrument that would allow India to recast some of the assumptions and norms that have until now set the boundaries of these debates.

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CHAPTER 46

INDIA IN THE INTERNATIONAL TRADING SYSTEM

PRADEEP S. MEHTA AND BIPUL CHATTERJEE

Introduction

At the entrance of the building that houses the trade ministry is a poster proclaiming India as the fastest growing free market democracy. While today it paints a picture of one of India's greatest achievements, not too long ago, such an assertion would have been regarded as almost blasphemous. Since India's olden days of autarky, its foreign trade policy has undergone a tectonic shift from its philosophy of import substitution to today's more outward-looking approach.

From the 1950s to the late 1980s, India did not exhibit much interest in trade or in the opening up of its economy to foreign investment. During this period, India's economic policies were primarily focused on inward-looking development planning (Chakravarty 1987). The reason behind this was that in India, trade and imperialism were considered synonymous with British rule, which had come to India first in the guise of a commercial enterprise, the East India Company. Choosing to neglect the principles of free trade, India's import-substitution approach to development included the promotion of a strong manufacturing sector, infant industry protection, and export pessimism. As a founding member of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), India's contribution to negotiations was reflective of its domestic philosophy and its stance always articulated the needs of developing countries, particularly industrialization efforts of newly independent countries. Up until the 1980s therefore, although India was an active member of the GATT, its policy choices differed from the underlying principles of trade liberalization.

At the dawn of the twenty-first century, India was hard hit by the surge in oil prices in the early 1990s. Triggered by the 1990–1 Gulf War, the crisis imposed a severe strain on

India's balance of payments and coupled with a tightening of foreign exchange policies and internal political instability, India experienced a fall in national output. The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989 marked the end of India's faith in central planning. Due to growing political support in favor of further liberalization, India began to pursue a policy of privatization and deregulation which finally resulted in the gradual adoption of a more liberal trade and investment policy regime. As a result of market-oriented policies, India began to experience unprecedented growth and by 2008, India's trade was 20 times what it had been in 1980 (Saggi 2010).

India's liberalization coincided with its joining of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in spite of much domestic opposition particularly over the contentious issue of patents and intellectual property protection more generally. Today, India plays a key role in negotiations and while its involvement remains largely in support of fairer terms of trade for developing countries, the coherence of its economic philosophy with the underpinnings of the international trading system is new. This chapter argues that even though India's foreign policy has not always aligned with the fundamental principles of trade liberalization, its recognition of the international trading system as the vehicle for trade negotiations has remained resolute. As the years have progressed and as India has adopted a more outward-oriented approach, it has increasingly begun to garner the benefits of an open economy. However, India still has much work to do, particularly at the domestic level, to fully leverage the benefits of the international trading system. It must now turn its attention to facilitating convergence between its domestic policy and its foreign policy.

The Evolution of India's Foreign Trade Policy

Economic Nationalism

In the 1500s India was the world's largest economy and accounted for almost 30 per cent of global GDP (Nayyar 2013). It maintained this position until the eighteenth century, when the East India Company established its rule in India and with it, trade monopoly. Following India's first battle for independence in 1857, power was transferred to the Crown until 1947 when India gained its independence from British colonial rule.

At the time of India's independence, India accounted for only about 3 per cent of global gross domestic product (GDP) (Nayyar 2013). India attributed the British policy of free trade as the major cause of India's economic underdevelopment and as such, opted to follow the Soviet-style centrally planned economy model (IIE 2003). The Soviet-style economic planning placed heavy reliance on import substitution and manufacturing with public sectors as commanding heights. During this period, India's imports and

foreign exchange were severely controlled and the importation of consumer goods was completely prohibited.

This inward orientation exacted significant costs on the economy. India's GDP growth rate averaged 3.75 per cent a year from 1950 to 1980, putting it in the category of a low income, slow-growing economy (IIE 2003). In the rare cases that imports were permitted, the tariffs were so high that it made very little sense to import. Consumption of foreign exchange was closely monitored. Such restrictions laid the foundations for a flourishing black market in both goods and foreign currencies.

Shortly after India became independent in 1947, it became a founding member of GATT in 1948. Although party to almost all multilateral treaties and agreements, India's foreign trade policy, like that of most other developing countries at that time, was highly protectionist and deviated from the objective of gradual liberalization espoused by this multilateral agreement. This strategy was derived from the pre-independence influence of the self-sufficiency movement but also reflected much of the development economics thinking at the time (Lehmann 2014).

While much of the literature purports that developing countries did not play an active role in GATT negotiations during this period, India's experience tells a different story. India's participation in this multilateral body was not underpinned solely by a desire to evade commitments to tariff reductions and reciprocity (Scott 2009). Instead, India played a key role in advocating the interests of developing countries at all times. It was the exclusion of development considerations from the proposed charter of the International Trade Organization (ultimately still-born, with the GATT serving as of 1948 as a less ambitious substitute) that first raised India's ire in 1945. The US-led proposals made no reference to either development or to the special circumstances which less developed countries faced. When it was asserted that the International Trade Organization was not the appropriate platform for discussing development issues, India and several other developing countries noted that the economic success of the very countries that sought to exclude these concerns had been due to their own earlier use of tariffs and other regulatory devices (UNCTE 1946).

The problem for developing countries with free trade as a concept was that it was 'tainted by the legacy of colonialism', therefore it came as little surprise that as colonies gained their freedom they sought to eradicate all the measures imposed on them by their colonizers (Scott 2009). Developing countries felt that liberalization as put forward by the United States and the United Kingdom was one of self-interest. They argued that it was an attempt to open new markets for manufactured goods and secure supplies of raw materials (Scott 2009). In India's comments, it asserted that the aim of industrialized countries in advocating tariff reductions and other barriers was simply to expand their markets for manufactured goods (UNCTE 1946). Even during the negotiations when the United States insisted that the principle of reciprocity be the foundational principle of the GATT, India led the case against its adoption arguing that due to the limited size of their domestic markets, the bargaining power of developing countries was inadequate to induce concessions from developed countries (Ismail 2009). Again India's concerns fell on deaf ears. However, it consistently remained committed to the interests

of developing countries over ensuing decades. Even when unable to win much ground, India remained convinced that the multilateral level was the optimal platform for debate on such issues.

Unable to negotiate concessions in sectors that benefited them, developing countries, such as India, became increasingly insulated from the global economy (Wilkinson and Scott 2008). While global trade grew at an average of 7.9 per cent annually from 1950 to 1973, India's trade grew by only 2.7 per cent annually. India's trade/GDP ratio also experienced a declining trend from 7.3 per cent in 1951 to less than 4 per cent until 1973 (IIE 2003). From the mid-1960s to the early 1980s, India's high poverty rates and low levels of employment marked the darkest period of independent India's economic history, generating average annual growth of only around 3 per cent, which sardonically became known as the Hindu rate of growth. The combination of India's booming population and its diminishing growth rate exacerbated its domestic challenges (Panagariya 2008).

During the period from the 1950s to the 1970s, the industrialized countries eventually graduated from low to high value manufacturing and services and the East and South-East Asian regions quickly capitalized on the void left by this change. India remained closed and did not make any attempt to seize this opportunity. As a result, the contribution of India's manufacturing sector to its GDP continued to hover around 10–12 per cent. Not only did India fail to transform its economy from an agriculture base to mass-scale manufacturing, it did not even consider adopting a strategic trade policy to help some of its big natural resource-based and manufacturing-oriented public sector firms to become significant players in international markets. Instead, this period was characterized by the imposition of strict licensing, accrual of aid flows, decline in domestic savings, and resultant increase in saving–investment gaps, reduction in foreign exchange reserves, and the stagnation of trade performance. India remained among the most closed economies in the world and up until the early 1990s its foreign exchange was tightly controlled and its domestic production was highly protected with roughly 93 per cent of its tradable goods covered by some type of quantitative restrictions (Pursell 1996).

In the latter part of the 1980s, India's policy-makers started to adopt a more liberal trade, investment, and industrial policy. However, the structural weaknesses of the Indian economy hindered progress. Due to a combination of the discovery of oil in the Arabian sea near Bombay, a succession of favorable agricultural harvests, and an agricultural policy that offered attractive prices to producers resulting in the accumulation of public stocks of food grains, the government chose not to adopt contractionary policies in response to the oil price hike in 1979–80 and relaxed its regulations on domestic and international transactions. India's trade policy was also then set for three years at a time to reduce the uncertainties of year-to-year policy changes. However, the selective deregulation of limited goods meant that the policy regime did not change its basic character. India's exports began to grow over this period but this was attributed more to real exchange rate depreciation as a result of exogenous reforms to an active policy of nominal devaluation or to explicit trade policy reforms. Growth performance also

improved markedly during the 1980s but was supported on the demand side by unsustainable fiscal policies (IIE 2003).

Indeed, it was a short-lived growth spurt. As opposed to undertaking long-term planning to foster future development, particularly in the 1980s, the Planning Commission of India became a platform for the attainment of the narrow political objectives of the ruling class. This highly precarious situation eventually came to an abrupt end in the 1990s. The fall of the Berlin Wall ended India's close economic and political relations with the Soviet Union. And the Gulf War of 1990–1 sharply increased the price of oil, hitting India hard and resulting in the deterioration of its balance of payments, which further compounded India's fiscal problems (IIE 2003).

Economic Liberalization

In 1990 India's current account deficit stood at 3.2 per cent of GDP and its debt service payments were more than 30 per cent of the Union budget. The urgency of these external pressures and the growing domestic realization that a closed economy had proved to be detrimental to India's growth finally led India to consider economic reforms. 1991 saw the beginning of the implementation of reforms that included the abolition of various licenses, introduction of a degree of deregulation, relaxation of foreign exchange controls, and promotion of greater competition. As a consequence, India's trade policy also underwent a transformation. Srinivasan and Tendulkar (2003) noted that in 1990, 65 per cent of India's imports were subjected to non-tariff barriers and the import weighted average tariff stood at 87 per cent. As India's economy opened, by 1996, India's average rate of tariff had dropped to 24.6 per cent.

As India began to embrace the principles of free trade and enhance its 'outward orientation', it began to profit from the international trading system. The 1990s reflected a change in thinking that had previously associated openness and trade with imperialism. As India's economic principles began to converge with those of the multilateral trading system, India began to experience sharply higher economic growth, in the range of 7–9 per cent. India's economic reforms had two broad objectives: the reorientation of the economy from a centrally planned one to a 'market-friendly' economy with provision for necessary safety nets and secondly, changes in fiscal and monetary policies in order to achieve broader macroeconomic stabilization in the face of an increasing outward orientation.

The 1990s coincided with the conclusion of the Uruguay Round of negotiations by the Contracting Parties of the GATT that resulted in the establishment of the WTO in 1995. Two years after the end of the Tokyo Round in the late 1970s, the United States had initiated the process towards a new round. Spearheaded by India and Brazil, the majority of developing countries were opposed to the proposed extension of the GATT into services, intellectual property (IP), and investment. Developing countries argued that the previous rounds had not yielded much gain for them and that action should first be taken to remove voluntary export restrictions, the multi-fiber agreement on trade in

textiles and clothing, as well as trade-distorting domestic subsidies in agriculture sectors of industrialized countries (Chatterjee and Narsalay 1998). They argued that the fulfillment of earlier commitments by developed countries to reduce their trade barriers affecting the exports of developing countries was a higher priority than launching a new set of negotiations.

In spite of these concerns, the Uruguay Round was launched and proved to be the longest and most ambitious of all the GATT rounds. The inclusion of new issues and a further agenda for liberalization of trade in agriculture and textiles in the ensuing agreements were the most significant development that had taken place in the international trading system in the post-war era. The Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs Agreement) eventually proved to be the most contentious. Prior to the Uruguay Round, participation in agreements was voluntary and had resulted in a number of developing countries not signing on. However, the 1994 Marrakesh Agreement establishing the WTO changed this situation since the Uruguay Round negotiations took place under 'single undertaking' (nothing is agreed unless everything is agreed). Thus, all agreements negotiated under its auspices would also have to be treated as multilateral agreements (Rege 2012).

The TRIPs Agreement made it mandatory for developing countries to align their intellectual property rights regimes with those of developed countries and despite India's stiff opposition, it was obliged to sign on to the agreement if it wished to continue to participate in multilateral negotiations. Cognizant that the multilateral level remained the optimal platform for trade negotiations, India acquiesced even though the introduction of the TRIPs Agreement itself marked the inclusion of a trade-restrictive agreement in a supposedly trade liberalizing agenda. It was at this point that developing countries began to make use of trade-offs within their negotiating stances. India and other developing countries decided to allow for the ingress of intellectual property in return for the elimination of quotas on textiles and clothing. Unfortunately, the text of the Uruguay Round Agreement on Textiles & Clothing suggested that the quotas on imports of particular categories of textiles and clothing would continue for another ten years which delayed the ability of developing countries to garner immediate benefits from the integration of this Agreement into the GATT (Mehta 1993).

In 2001 the Doha Round was launched amidst the dissatisfaction and disappointment of the developing countries with the performance of the WTO in respect to the implementation of Uruguay Round agreements. At the Doha Ministerial Conference, India and many other developing countries pointed out the need to recognize the 'existing development deficit' in various WTO agreements and called for 'necessary remedial action'. The TRIPs text was one example of an unbalanced agreement. India led the charge in securing acknowledgment at the Doha Ministerial Conference that the TRIPs should not hinder members from taking measures to protect public health through, among other measures, issuing compulsory licenses for producing generic (off-patent) medicines including supplying them to other developing countries where domestic production capacity does not exist. By March 2010, 54 countries had ratified the related amendment (Saggi 2010). What still remains to

be clarified, however, is the issue of patenting of life forms under Article 27.3(b) of the TRIPs Agreement.

In Doha, India and many other developing countries also opposed the inclusion of 'new' issues (competition, investment, transparency in government procurement, and trade facilitation) in the trade liberalization agenda. They argued that these issues were not part of their development agenda. This was despite the fact that the benefits of trade liberalization, particularly with regard to the role of trade in poverty reduction, cannot be obtained fully unless there is synchronized liberalization of trade policy and other major economic policies (Razzaque and Raihan 2008). Eventually in 2013, the WTO members agreed to a multilateral deal on trade facilitation. The other three issues dropped off the Doha Development Agenda.

This despite the fact that foreign direct investment (FDI) was already a part of the multilateral trade discussion. One of the major modes of supply of services is FDI, as negotiated during the Uruguay Round under the General Agreement on Trade in Services. Furthermore, much global FDI occurs in the services sector—as much as 65 per cent of global FDI in 2012 (Adlung 2014).

The Doha mandate called for modalities in agriculture to be agreed by March 2002, and in non-agricultural market access or industrial goods (NAMA) by the end of May 2002. That did not happen. At the Cancun Ministerial Conference, in 2003, India highlighted that developed countries needed to commit to the elimination of agricultural subsidies as the distortions in their policies held the key to resolving the differences amongst members. Again, two years later at the Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong, India reiterated that the structure of the present international trading system was distorted against 'development' and that the outcome of the Doha Round would hinge on its achievement in this area (Saggi 2010).

However, and in spite of India's increased openness, like many other countries, it sought to maintain agricultural self-sufficiency. This was evident in India's actions at the ninth Ministerial Conference in Bali in December 2013. India's insistence on ensuring a permanent solution for public stock-holding for food security purposes was reflective of its reluctance to make concessions in this sensitive area. However, at the same time, India demanded reductions in trade-distorting domestic support to agriculture from other WTO members, pushing for the elimination of export subsidies on trade in agriculture and insisting on the principle of proportionality. As a member of two powerful developing country groups on issues relating to trade in agriculture, India has established itself as a key contributor to the agricultural negotiations. The very emergence of these groups is a clear sign of the change in the power dynamics that have taken place since the emergence of the GATT (Saggi 2010).

While the agriculture sector remains at the heart of India's economy, employing a majority of its population, India's recent economic growth is attributable to the services sector which has established the country as world's seventh largest services importer and exporter. India is one of those countries that defied the traditional stages of development of gradually moving from agriculture to manufacturing to services as experienced by industrialized countries in the West and also the newly industrialized economies

of East and South-East Asia. For this reason, India has pushed for trade liberalization in services; in particular, bargaining for better market access, especially in Mode 1 (cross-border supply) and Mode 4 (movement of natural persons). The cross-border supply of services directly impacts software services and business process outsourcing, areas in which India possesses a clear comparative advantage

Services liberalization has not been a major feature of the Doha agenda. However, recently there has been a push by developed countries to establish a plurilateral agreement on Trade in Services, which will be limited to them, excluding a large majority of the WTO members. The majority of developing countries have expressed their apprehensions over this plurilateral approach, as it will undermine the virtues of trade multilateralism. Furthermore, the high ambition being sought by the United States in such a 'services plurilateral' is unlikely to attract developing countries as they are yet to prepare fully for appropriate domestic regulatory regimes.

In spite of this hesitancy towards plurilateral initiatives, a growing trend towards exclusive trade agreements of another kind began to unfold. The move to bilateral and regional trading agreements arose from the impasse of the Doha Round, given the inability of large developing countries and their developed counterparts to resolve a number of issues including trade-distorting subsidies in agriculture on the part of developed countries and relatively greater reduction of tariffs in certain industrial goods by developing countries. The impasse was reflective of the ability of developing countries to negotiate and organize that had grown over the years, and became particularly evident during a 2008 ministerial meeting in Geneva.

Due to this impasse, India, once reluctant to be party to any negotiations outside of the GATT/WTO system except with its immediate neighbors, began actively to pursue preferential trading agreements. India signed its first Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Sri Lanka in 1999 and based on the success of that agreement, it subsequently signed ten more FTAs. While it is currently negotiating a number of other FTAs including one with the European Union, India's most ambitious deal is its current discussions in the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreement, which comprises the ten-member ASEAN (Association of South-East Asian Nations) group, Australia, China, Japan, New Zealand, and South Korea. Many of the new-generation Indian FTAs include 'new' issues such as investment and competition, which it had opposed at multilateral forums. The RCEP agreement is perceived as India's counter to the growing trend of mega FTAs such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership agreements.

In spite of this move towards increased regional agreements, India's Department of Revenue under the Ministry of Finance claims that India's engagements through various FTAs have not boosted exports. The number of exports to countries with which India has preferential trading agreements has shown a decline. In 2007, India signed a PTA with Chile when two-way trade stood at US$2.3 billion. However, instead of growing, trade with Chile declined toUS$2.1 billion in 2010–11. In 2012–13, India's bilateral trade with Chile began to grow and reached US$3.6 billion. This was due to a notable increase in imports from Chile. Recent data also show that between 2011–12 and 2012–13, India's

exports to the ASEAN group of countries declined by 10.2 per cent. A lack of awareness of these FTAs, complex Rules of Origin, and inability to enhance trade competitiveness through domestic reforms have played a role in preventing India from taking full advantage of these agreements.

India's Domestic Context

While India has made large strides within the international trading system, it suffers from a number of domestic constraints that have prevented it from fully garnering the benefits of the international trade system. This is mainly due to its under-developed domestic regulatory environment and India's inability to fully appreciate the growing relationship among trade, investment, and competition. Thus, India finds itself in a position where once again it has to look inward, but this time with a different agenda.

Evolving geoeconomics and geopolitics have complicated the global governance scene as evidenced by the emergence of a multi-polar world, slow progress on global trade and investment liberalization through multilateral diplomacy, the proliferation of preferential trading agreements, and the evolution of multiple standards by private sectors. Over the next few decades India is forecasted to become the third largest economy of the world while the global economy witnesses a significant shift of its center of gravity towards Asia and it is projected that 'the world's economic centre of gravity' will be located by 2050 somewhere between India and China (Quah 2011). However, in spite of India being an 'emerging economy' one-quarter of its population lingers in extreme poverty and a large majority of those who are engaged in agriculture and the rural non-farm economy are unproductively employed. Therefore, the country needs to examine how international trade and foreign investment can play a role in confronting extreme poverty in an interconnected world, particularly by shifting the Indian economy from low value-added services to labor-intensive manufacturing.

Long-term data illustrate the extent of India's participation in international trade over the years (Figure 46.1). The conspicuous kink in the year 2000–1 has been attributed to a number of causes including the establishment of the WTO, China's accession to the WTO and the growth of services trade much of which is because of foreign direct investment in service sectors such as telecommunications. In 1950, India's total trade amounted to US$2 billion, in 2000 it underwent an exponential peak and by 2011, India's trade was almost one trillion US dollars. Similarly, while in 1990 India attracted only US$200 million of FDI (0.1 per cent of GDP), it witnessed a sharp increase to over US$7 billion before the financial crisis of 2008 (almost 2 per cent of GDP). It could have attracted more if further liberalization had taken place in sectors such as multi-brand retailing (supermarkets), insurance, and banking. (Many of the states are opposed to allowing foreign supermarkets in order to protect the interests of small retailers.) In spite of this improving trend in both trade and investment, careful calibration of further

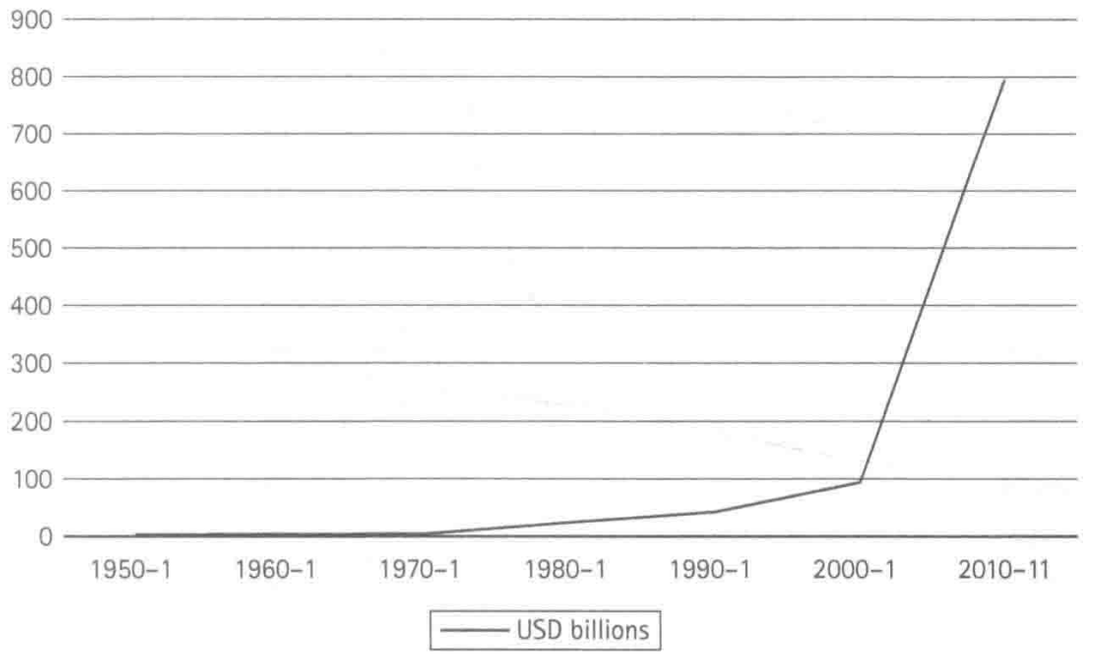

FIGURE 46.1 Foreign trade, 1950–2012 (US$ billions).

Source: Planning Commission of India (2014).

market opening, supportive of socially inclusive development, is required to foster more equitable growth in India.

One of India's largest impediments in making its trade policy work for its domestic objectives of inclusive growth and social development is the lack of coherence between its trade policy and other macroeconomic policies such as those governing manufacturing, investment, competition, and, most importantly, the markets of factors of production such as capital and labor (which have hardly liberalized at all).

The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) of the Department of Commerce leads India's domestic trade policy-making. In 2004, the annual export–import policy was replaced by a long-term national foreign trade policy. However, this long-term trade policy is not subject to much consultation with the relevant stakeholder groups before its adoption. What little consultation that takes place is Delhi-centric, ad hoc, and narrow in the sense that a few national-level business associations are asked to provide their views on predetermined templates without much strategic thinking on linkages between trade policy and macroeconomic policy instruments such as manufacturing, investment, competition, and monetary and fiscal policies. There is no institutional mechanism for independent and ex-ante as well as ex-post impact analysis of India's trade policy in respect to its economic, social, and environmental sustainability.

Besides this lack of a broad vision of the role that a country's trade policy should play in furthering domestic economic reforms for fostering investment and competition in the marketplace, there is also hardly any review of the objectives set out in India's trade policy. Currently these objectives are export promotion and employment generation, which depicts a narrow vision. To date, the DGFT has yet to come out with a report on the extent to which the objectives of the country's trade policy have been met. This

contrasts with many other developing countries such as China and Vietnam that have used trade policy as an effective instrument for domestic economic reforms.

With regard to trade-related multilateral diplomacy, particularly in the context of implementation of the Uruguay Round agreements, in 1996, the Department of Commerce set up a think-tank, which was followed by the setting up of a National Advisory Committee on International Trade. It consisted of a few former trade negotiators, representatives of the business community, and two members representing civil society groups (including the first author of this chapter). The objective was to discuss the implementation concerns of the Uruguay Round agreements and how to deal with new issues of competition, investment, trade facilitation, and transparency in government procurement, which came up for discussion at the first WTO Ministerial Conference held in Singapore in 1996.

Though this institutional mechanism was useful to discuss challenges faced by India in implementing Uruguay Round commitments and how to deal with new issues, its scope was narrow. There was no well-structured mechanism to gather, preserve, and make use of institutional memory of former policy-makers and negotiators and secondly, discussions were reactive and limited only to India's concerns and without much discussion on the positions and concerns of other WTO members vis-à-vis those of India.

More importantly, attempts to make India a more proactive player in exploiting its comparative advantages were ignored within this grouping. A common refrain was that making such demands would put additional pressure on the country for further liberalization; India remained defensive as a mantra. No strategic document was prepared for this body relating to larger issues in India's multilateral diplomacy, particularly its strategic and security interests. For example, a demand was made by an international non-governmental organization of Indian origin, CUTS International, to push a proactive agenda for stand-alone WTO agreements on trade in software services and movement of natural persons but they were sidelined.

There was also no representation from other relevant ministries, particularly from the Ministry of External Affairs, Department of Revenue, and Department of Agriculture in this body. Alas, even this rudimentary institutional mechanism was dismantled in 2004 after the establishment of the United Progressive Alliance government in New Delhi. Since then the Department of Commerce has been following an ad hoc process of consulting a limited number of stakeholders. Even then groups representing consumer interests and those working on other major issues of public interests are not always consulted.

In short, India is currently suffering from a lack of any organizational mechanism to comprehensively deal with trade-related issues of multilateral diplomacy and their relationship with domestic concerns. Most strikingly, there is a disconnect between major players—the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the Ministry of External Affairs, the Ministry of Finance, and other important line ministries and state governments. As a result, trade policy loses some of its significance due to this siloed approach.

Not only is there no comprehensive consultation mechanism among the government departments and between and among the state and non-state actors, there also is not much consultation with subnational actors. There is an overwhelming view in New Delhi that since international trade falls within the competence of the Union government without requirement of ratification of international treaties by the Union Parliament, there is no need to consult subnational actors. A petition in the early 1990s by the state governments of Bihar and West Bengal in the Supreme Court of India argued that since agriculture and health were matters of state jurisdiction under the Indian constitution, the Union government was bound to consult them before signing the Uruguay Round agreements. (The Supreme Court rejected the petition.)

Given the changing nature and dimensions of India's domestic politics—from a unitary model to a more federal model—there is an urgent need for comprehensive consultation with a larger set of state and non-state actors, particularly at the subnational level. This is imperative to achieve congruence between trade policy objectives and those of other public policy matters. The most striking result of this lack of institutional development to comprehensively deal with trade policy matters is that the Indian establishment is yet to understand the relationship between external and internal liberalization, between goods and factor markets liberalization. This is why there is hardly any attempt to liberalize the internal markets of means of production (capital and labor) and, vice versa, there is no demand on the part of India to liberalize external markets of factors of production including knowledge as a means of production—Doha Round negotiations on a more liberalized regime for international labor mobility, the relationship between trade, debt, and finance, and trade and technology transfer have been quietly buried. More interestingly, there is not much attempt on the part of India to make proactive demands on these issues at either bilateral or regional levels.

Many non-state actors (civil society groups) in India have robust relationships with state and non-state actors of other countries on subjects such as trade-related labor standards, on which India had a defensive position during the early years of the WTO. Indeed Indian civil society groups were in a much better position to explain and articulate this position to their counterparts in protagonist countries. Within India they were ignored. Except at the Hong Kong Ministerial Conference of the WTO members in 2005, there has been no civil society representative in India's official delegation. Perhaps as a result, no lessons have emerged on how their presence could help India take the lead in forming a larger coalition of developing and least developed countries to negotiate more development-friendly approaches within the Doha Round. And this in spite of an Indian government-organized international stakeholder conference in 2008 of state and non-state actors in partnership with civil society groups and think-tanks, which helped India to better articulate its positions on all major aspects of modalities of negotiations on subjects of the Doha Development Agenda at the crucial ministerial meeting held in Geneva in July 2008.

In brief, while the fastest growing free market democracy of the world ignored the virtues of inclusiveness, many other countries including low-income and poor developing

countries have done better. Thus, the strides that India has taken at the international level need to be matched by progress at the domestic level (PIC 2014).

Conclusions and Recommendations

Many argue that India needs to embark on a new growth trajectory by adopting 'next generation' reforms, engaging more with trading partners both regionally and globally, making specific attempts to integrate itself into global value chains through strategic trade and investment policy instruments and to align its trade policy with foreign policy objectives. The moot question is whether the domestic political situation in India is conducive towards this change. This could be achieved if the Indian government chooses to direct its attention to strengthening its domestic regime that deals with trade policy and related issues.

It is unlikely to happen in the near future, however, because India seems to consider trade as a residual method to achieving its domestic objectives. For instance, while India is taking some significant steps to strengthen its trading relationship with other South Asian countries and those in East and South-East Asia, there is no comprehensive attempt to look at the relationship between the trade-related objectives of penetrating these new markets with other strategic- and security-related objectives of its neighborhood policy or Look East policy. It is also unclear whether India has considered this as one of its strategic objectives while negotiating a Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership agreement with ASEAN group of countries along with Australia, China, Japan, New Zealand, and South Korea.

Although India is a small economy in respect to international trade (at just about 3 per cent share of global trade) one of India's biggest strengths is its domestic market—its consumer base. Not only is that base becoming larger, with an increasing purchasing power, it will increase further given India's demography and a steady reduction in poverty. Other players of the international trading system have become acutely interested in accessing India's consumers, which can add to India's clout within the international trading system. But, the Indian establishment is not yet attuned to making effective use of 'consumer interests' and balancing them with 'producer interests' through the use of trade policy instruments, allowing it also to address its wider foreign policy objectives.

This would require a paradigm shift in the manner in which trade is considered domestically within India. A significantly different policy (and greater political drive) would be required to bring about such a shift. India has to embrace a whole-of-government approach for trade policy-making and its implementation.

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CHAPTER 47

MULTILATERALISM IN INDIA'S NUCLEAR POLICY

A Questionable Default Option

RAJESH RAJAGOPALAN

INDIA's record of participation in multilateral nuclear diplomacy at the United Nations (UN), the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and its predecessors, and at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has been consistent but with mixed results. India strongly supports multilateral efforts in nuclear arms control and disarmament and has been an enthusiastic participant and indeed promoter of many major multilateral nuclear arms control efforts.

Despite this record of participation, India has been largely estranged from the global nuclear regime for over three decades. Since the 1998 nuclear tests and especially after the US–India nuclear deal was concluded in 2008, India's relations with the global nuclear regime and its institutions have improved somewhat. But the fundamental cause of the estrangement—India's long-standing refusal to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as a non-nuclear power—still remains and continues to pose a challenge.

India's inclination to seek a multilateral route to security through arms control and disarmament is puzzling for a couple of different reasons. For one, as a fairly weak state in the international arena it is not clear why India saw so much promise in multilateralism despite the evident handicap of India's material weakness. While it could be argued that India took the multilateral route precisely because it was weak, that does not explain why India invested as much as it did in these ventures or persisted with such efforts despite repeated failures. More importantly India had unilateral options to enhance its security but chose instead to invest in multilateral efforts despite its uncertainties and India's previous experience.

Indian leaders appear not to have considered the unilateral path to nuclear security seriously at least until the late 1980s. Thus, the multilateral path became the only alternative.[1] Consequently, India endowed multilateral efforts with far greater promise than was realistic. But such optimism also made the disappointment far greater, which

subsequently led to intense antipathy and defensiveness towards multilateralism in this and possibly other fields.

This chapter is divided into three sections. In the first, I set out an explanation for India's approach to multilateralism in the nuclear sphere which suggests the reasons why India for many years sought security through multilateral efforts even when such efforts proved fruitless. In the second section, I consider India's multilateral diplomacy on nuclear disarmament issues. This will cover a number of Indian initiatives, from Nehru's proposals in the 1950s to the Rajiv Gandhi Action Plan (RGAP) in the 1980s and more recent ones in the same vein. The common theme in all such Indian initiatives has been that they were not rooted in existing international political realities which made them seem woolly-headed or, worse, cynical. The third section will cover India's approach to major nuclear arms control measures such as the NPT, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), and the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT). Though no negotiations have begun on FMCT, there are common elements in India's approach to all three negotiations. The concluding section summarizes key arguments and considers their implications for India's future multilateral engagement in nuclear arms control and disarmament.

Explaining India's Nuclear Diplomacy

India has invested heavily in multilateralism, but its rewards seem to be particularly meagre. India's inability to get its way in such settings has usually soured Indian responses. A number of previous accounts of Indian foreign policy have pointed to India's prickly personality in the international arena. Stephen Cohen suggests that 'India seems to relish "getting to no"' in international negotiations (Cohen 2002: 87). Others, like C. Raja Mohan, argue that 'India's complex negotiating style often degenerates into self-defeating sophistry' (Raja Mohan 2007: 196). This prickliness might be a general feature of Indian diplomacy, especially in dealing with Western powers, but it is also a feature much in evidence in multilateral nuclear negotiations, possibly because these negotiations have usually been dominated by the United States. What explains this attitude? Amrita Narlikar identifies culture and domestic politics as the reason for India's negotiating style and its 'prickliness' but also demonstrates that India adopts different styles with different groups and in different settings (Narlikar 2006, 2013). Indian negotiators cannot afford to make concessions in international negotiations because of a domestic political culture that will pillory any concession as a 'sell-out'. This provides a good explanation as to why Indian engagements with multilateral nuclear efforts usually end badly, though it does not explain why they often begin with great hope.

In nuclear multilateralism in particular, security concerns cannot be ignored and they have played a big part in success or failure of India's strategies. Andrew Kennedy argues that between the 1960s and the 1980s, India used both implicit nuclear umbrellas and international institutions to shield it from nuclear threats rather than

build nuclear weapons (Kennedy 2011). Facing a new nuclear threat from China in the 1960s, India saw both the Partial Test Ban Treaty (PTBT) and the NPT as a way of constraining Chinese nuclear advances. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, India proposed the RGAP for nuclear disarmament and supported the CTBT as a way of limiting Pakistan's nuclear advances. This addresses an important issue that is overlooked in the arguments about India's obstructionist approach to international negotiations: India exhibits great enthusiasm for multilateral approaches at the beginning of various engagements, which turns to bitterness at the end because India's expectations were not met. So, though India has a reputation for saying 'no' in multilateral nuclear negotiations, it generally starts out with a 'yes'. India's initial enthusiasm and support for the NPT negotiations, its co-sponsorship of the CTBT talks, and the RGAP proposal all indicate significant faith in multilateralism. India's quest for security explains not just the 'no' at the end of the negotiations, but also the 'yes' at the beginning.

This leads to a further question however. While it is clear that India saw multilateral nuclear negotiations as one way to deal with nuclear security threats, it is less clear why it saw this as a credible option. Admittedly, India might not have been able to avoid multilateral exercises such as the NPT or CTBT negotiations, but this does not explain Indian enthusiasm for these efforts. India's experience in multilateralism in the 1950s, a time when India's international influence was at its zenith, should have suggested the limits of India's capacity. On both the Kashmir issue and Nehru's disarmament initiatives India got little satisfaction. After the India–China border war and Nehru's passing, India's international influence waned and this should have resulted in greater scepticism in Delhi about multilateral options than it apparently did.

India did have other options in both the 1960s and the 1990s which would have served it better. If India had conducted a nuclear explosion in the 1960s, it likely could have joined the NPT as a Nuclear Weapon State (NWS) and avoided decades of difficulty (which have yet to end). Similarly, it could have conducted the needed series of nuclear weapon tests in the mid-1990s and then joined the CTBT instead of staying out. But there is little to indicate that these options were given serious consideration, especially in the 1960s. Though the cost of a nuclear arsenal was a key factor, Indian leaders such as Prime Minister Shastri (1964–6) had decided against going down the nuclear weapons path and invoked the costs involved to justify his policy. In fact, Shastri sought British assistance with costing of a nuclear arsenal, but the British provided an exaggerated figure, while keeping secret an assessment that India could build an arsenal 'with little technical difficulty and at very little additional cost' (Schrafstetter 2002). More importantly, there is little indication that the risks associated with a multilateral path or the long-term costs thereof were assessed.[2] The immediate costs of nuclear unilateralism dominated considerations rather than the efficacy of multilateralism or its longer-term viability. Once the unilateral nuclear path was rejected, multilateralism was the default option, whatever its long-term disadvantages. Multilateralism was, simply put, the expedient short-term political solution. As Stephen Cohen noted, 'India postponed a decision' (2002: 162).

Several other factors probably led to this conclusion. The Indian political and administrative leadership had moral qualms about nuclear weapons which made it difficult to consider going down the unilateral nuclear weapons path. More importantly, though India worried about China's nuclear weapons in the 1960s and Pakistani nuclear progress in the 1980s and 1990s, India felt no existential threat that would have made nuclear weapons an immediate necessity, which made it easier to default to multilateral efforts. This analysis posited a fundamentally different situation from many other countries that sought nuclear weapons because they feared an existential threat either to the state or the ruling regime, including China, Israel, Pakistan, and North Korea. India faced significant security threats, including from China, but these were not perceived in New Delhi to be existential threats.

But why did India's multilateralism fail? The simple answer is that success in multilateralism is dependent as much on the distribution of material power as on the force of arguments. India had strong arguments about the inequities of the global nuclear regime—though Indian commentators often ignore the convenient self-interest in these arguments—but it had nowhere near the power of those pushing counter-arguments. This included not just the United States and the Western world but also the Soviet Union. Despite their disagreements about many other issues, the superpowers developed a consensus around the global nuclear regime that helped crush India's opposition and forced India out into the cold.

Briefly then, India sought the multilateral path on nuclear weapons issues because it was unwilling to take available unilateral measures, but its material weakness ensured that this diplomatic strategy would fail too, consigning it to the worst of all possible positions.

India's Multilateral Efforts in Nuclear Disarmament

Nuclear disarmament has been an important plank from the earliest days of independent India's foreign policy. Despite the singular lack of any progress whatsoever, it continues to be reiterated by New Delhi, at least rhetorically. Not all this policy was multilateral in the strict sense of the term because it revolved more around public declarations of objectives than actual proposals advanced in multilateral settings. This was particularly true during the first few decades when India's activism in the nuclear disarmament arena was most pronounced. Morally-freighted idealism was definitely an important driver for India's persistence in pushing for nuclear disarmament, but both the key nuclear disarmament proposal that India advocated—Nehru's test ban proposal from the 1960s and the RGAC in the 1980s—represented attempts to use multilateral forums to resolve India's nuclear security dilemmas so that India could avoid having to develop nuclear weapons.

There is little doubt that Indian leaders abhorred nuclear weapons. The nature of India's freedom struggle left in them a deep sense of idealism with which they approached issues of foreign policy (Bhagavan 2012). This found resonance in the campaign against nuclear weapons. As Lawrence Wittner notes, Nehru was the 'most eloquent and persistent critic of nuclear weapons', expressing the hope as early as 1946 that India and other countries 'would "prevent the use of atomic weapons"' (Wittner 2009: 48). But Nehru, unlike other Indian leaders, appeared equally enamoured by the potential of nuclear energy for a developing India, and he strongly supported an extensive nuclear research programme that was primarily oriented towards civilian nuclear energy. He was also aware of the potential that this provided India to develop nuclear weapons, even though his views on going down that path veered between ambiguity and outright opposition.[3] In addition to dealing with the threat of a nuclear war, it is possible that Nehru saw nuclear disarmament as a way of getting off the horns of a dilemma centred on building a nuclear establishment in India without going down the path of nuclear weapons (Kennedy 2012: 203–4). Nevertheless, it was unclear how progress could be made towards nuclear disarmament considering that for both the United States and the Soviet Union, calls for nuclear disarmament were simply propaganda tools through which they were constantly seeking to out-manoeuvre each other rather than a programme in which either side was seriously interested.[4] This highlights one of the key problems that the Indian leadership repeatedly ignored—India's limited capacity to make multilateralism a meaningful choice.

In 1954, in the aftermath of the *Lucky Dragon* incident in which Japanese fishermen were the victims of nuclear fallout from an American nuclear test, Prime Minister Nehru proposed a ban on further nuclear tests (Higuchi 2011). But despite seemingly strong global public support for such a ban, there was little real support from the two superpowers for the move (Wittner 2009: 55–67). The US administration did consider a nuclear test ban but more from the perspective of the effect that US acceptance of such a ban would have on global public opinion (FRUS 1983). The superpowers would move towards a test ban treaty only several years later on the eve of the Chinese nuclear test, and even then it was a partial ban (PTBT) rather than the comprehensive test ban treaty that Nehru had hoped for. Nevertheless, India was one of the earliest signatories to the treaty, reflecting once again the Indian leadership's hope that multilateral efforts would provide some solution to India's nuclear security concerns.

But Nehru's campaign for nuclear disarmament was more geared to exhorting the leaders of the two blocs to do the right thing than to any serious, concrete, or programmatic proposals for nuclear disarmament. These exhortations were delivered through speeches, through his discussions with world leaders and through his support for various intellectual and activist initiatives such as the Pugwash movement (Wittner 2009: 69). Thus, while it garnered Nehru some sympathy, there was little by way of any forward movement towards the goal of nuclear disarmament, not least because the key nuclear powers had other concerns. For example, Nehru raised nuclear disarmament issues with President Eisenhower when he visited the United States in 1956 but Eisenhower was very clear that he did not trust the Soviets, especially because of the size

of their country and the fact that they published so little information about what they were doing (FRUS 1987).

Nehru was restricted to making such appeals because during this first decade of the nuclear arms race, nuclear disarmament was discussed directly between the two superpowers, with only nominal multilateral involvement, as when both the American Baruch Plan and its Soviet counterpart, the Gromyko Plan, were presented through the UN. In 1960, the first multilateral forum convened specifically for discussing disarmament issues, the Ten Nation Committee on Disarmament, was established but it included only states from the two opposing Cold War blocs. A year later, India was included in an expanded disarmament body, the Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee (ENDC), which finally gave New Delhi a voice in multilateral nuclear disarmament issues. The ENDC would eventually take its current form as the CD in 1979.

India continued to campaign for nuclear disarmament in the next two decades, but no specific nuclear disarmament plan was introduced by the Indian government nor even any concrete proposals (such as the Nehru test ban proposal of 1954). This would have to wait until 1988, when Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi introduced his RGAP, one of the most comprehensive, detailed and—it bears stating—unrealistic plans for nuclear disarmament ever proposed in the annals of multilateral negotiations (Gandhi 1988).

The RGAP was the culmination of a series of proposals that Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and others tabled on the nuclear disarmament front, also including the Six Nation Five Continent Initiative (Roche 1997: 70). These efforts were partly motivated by the renewed intensity of the Cold War in the early 1980s but, in the Indian case, it is also likely that Rajiv Gandhi saw nuclear disarmament as a potential solution to the South Asian nuclear competition too. The Pakistani nuclear weapons programme had been accelerating throughout the 1980s and it is possible that, like his grandfather Nehru, Rajiv Gandhi saw nuclear disarmament as a way out of the dilemma of guaranteeing Indian security without actually building nuclear weapons.[5] Alternatively, it could also have been a public relations ploy, designed to provide cover for India's nuclear weapons work. This is quite plausible as Prime Minister Gandhi also appears to have given permission to the Indian atomic scientists to go ahead with aspects of the research that were relevant to the construction of a nuclear weapon (Perkovich 1999: 294–5). At least one chronicler of the Indian nuclear programme seems to think that the initiative was Rajiv's own idea, reflecting Rajiv's reluctance to develop nuclear weapons, and that it did not enjoy support from the Ministry of External Affairs (Perkovich 1999: 298).

There was another similarity between the RGAP and Nehru's campaign for nuclear disarmament which was that neither had any moorings in contemporary international political realities. Nehru's very public campaign for nuclear disarmament failed to recognize that neither of the superpowers—the key players in the drama—had any interest other than in using disarmament proposals as rhetorical flourishes and, more importantly, that a weak India had few means of either cajoling or compelling them to accept Indian advice and preferences. While Nehru's global stature remained high throughout the 1950s, it had little impact on the superpowers, at least in this arena. Moreover, given the intensity of the Cold War competition and the dangers that each saw in the other, the

superpowers had little choice in moving towards nuclear disarmament. The situation was much the same in the 1980s. If anything, India's global role had diminished in the intervening decades and Rajiv Gandhi enjoyed nowhere near the stature of his grandfather on the global stage. While the RGAC was a lot more detailed than any previous such effort, it showed little understanding of the global political realities of the 1980s. If Soviet leader Gorbachev was somewhat receptive to Indian proposals, this also reflected Moscow's much-diminished global power.

The RGAP was not a major focus of Indian multilateral efforts after Rajiv Gandhi lost power, partly because the end of the Cold War and the perceived reduction of the global nuclear danger shrank the market for such proposals and also because the next several Indian governments had little use for it. But after the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government came to power in 2004, there was a modest revival of the RGAC, though this through a semi-private initiative rather than through a formal government proposal (and this at a time when the two nuclear superpowers could agree to reduce their arsenals to 1,500 warheads on each side) (Report of the Informal Group on the RGAP 88 2011).

At the multilateral level, India supported a Nuclear Weapons Convention and presented a working paper to the UN General Assembly in 2006 proposing the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, though this was more in the form of a list of objectives than that of a detailed programme such as the RGAP ('A Working Paper by India on Nuclear Disarmament' 2006). Though India is not as active today in multilateral nuclear disarmament efforts as in the 1950s or the 1980s, nuclear disarmament continues to enjoy significant levels of support within Indian political culture.

India's Multilateral Diplomacy in Nuclear Arms Control

There have been three principal elements in India's approach to multilateral nuclear arms control. First, India appeared more interested in comprehensive nuclear disarmament than in the half-measures which arms control represented, the latter in any event only surfacing years later. Second, despite its seeming opposition to arms control half-measures, it did actively participate in related discussions, including the nuclear non-proliferation treaty negotiations in the mid-1960s. Third, it has consistently sought to tie such arms control measures to nuclear disarmament, though it has rarely succeeded. But the effort to tie arms control to disarmament also provided India an exit strategy through which it could pull out of signing on to relevant treaties, as happened with both the NPT and the CTBT. A deeper problem with the Indian approach was that even as it participated in such multilateral nuclear arms control talks, New Delhi failed to assess the consequences thereof for Indian security. Both in the 1960s and the 1990s, such strategic failures had significant implications for India's security options.

The first nuclear arms control measure that India accepted was the PTBT (sometimes called the Limited Test Ban Treaty or LTBT) of 1963. This was an arms control rather than a disarmament measure and it was an even more limited measure than the test ban that Nehru had proposed in 1954 because the PTBT only prohibited atmospheric, underwater, and outer space nuclear testing. Why India was so keen on the PTBT is not clear, but the hope of constraining the Chinese nuclear weapons programme was possibly one motivation as the Chinese programme was not thought to be advanced enough at this stage to conduct subterranean tests.[6] In the event, Beijing simply ignored the PTBT and went ahead with its first nuclear test (an atmospheric one) a year later.

The nuclear non-proliferation treaty was the next major multilateral nuclear arms control measure on the anvil and it has come to define India's relationship with the global nuclear regime. The Irish were the first to propose a treaty to prevent the 'dissemination' of nuclear weapons, which they did in 1958 (Chassudovsky 1990). Even though it had been US policy to oppose the spread of nuclear weapons since the 1940s, Washington did not support the Irish proposal because of its worries about verification of compliance (de Cerrano 1996: 148–54). Serious negotiations towards a nuclear non-proliferation treaty began in the ENDC in 1962 but it was clear that the two superpowers were primarily concerned with focusing on the spread of weapons to countries that did not yet have them and they dominated the negotiations as joint chairs of the ENDC (Ungerer 2007: 403). India and the other non-aligned and Third World states wanted greater attention paid to nuclear disarmament and to international civil nuclear cooperation. But this was not to be. From India's perspective, as India's chief negotiator V. C. Trivedi would point out later, 'The Non-proliferation Treaty ... gives weapons proliferation privileges to nuclear weapon powers and exclusive prerogatives in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy' (Trivedi 1974). When it finally became clear that the treaty would be biased towards preventing the spread of weapons rather than the other issues that preoccupied India, New Delhi decided to reject the treaty. Though it is unclear when exactly New Delhi decided that it would not sign the treaty, Defence Minister Y. B. Chavan announced as much at the UN in October 1967 (Perkovich 1999: 139). Thus, despite actively participating in the treaty negotiations, the Indian government voted against the final treaty when it was presented in June 1968.

But refusal to sign the treaty was not the end of India's entanglement with it. In fact, in many ways it was the beginning. Over the next several decades, the treaty and the international regime that developed around the non-proliferation principle only grew stronger. When India opposed the discriminatory nature and unbalanced obligations of the treaty as it was being negotiated, New Delhi echoed the criticism from a number of other countries. China stayed out of the NPT for more than two decades (Malik 2000). Similarly, France, which was also a nuclear power under the terms of the treaty, stayed out until 1992. Despite strong domestic anti-nuclear sentiment, Japan took six years to ratify the treaty, though it signed it in 1970 (Endicott 1977). Neutral powers such as Sweden also had reservations about the treaty (Ungerer 2007: 405–6). Nevertheless, over time, all of these countries managed to make their peace with the treaty and acceded to it, leaving India out in the cold. India's isolation was more than a matter of principle,

however, because it carried with it meaningful consequences in the form of reluctance by other powers with advanced nuclear technology to share it or cooperate on it with India. Some of this flowed from India's 1974 nuclear test but that was not the sole reason. While India continued to oppose the treaty, international support for it was becoming stronger as were the rules of its regime. This would reach its climax when the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) decided in the early 1990s—after realizing that Iraq had come much closer than earlier thought to a nuclear weapon through a covert and undeclared nuclear programme—that countries would be required to sign the full-scope safeguards agreement with the IAEA before they could participate in international nuclear commerce (IAEA 2008; Peterson et al. 2008). This seriously impacted India's nuclear power programme, with even close partners such as the Russian Federation refusing to bat for India at the NSG.

The next major multilateral nuclear arms control initiative was the CTBT. India had, of course, campaigned for prohibiting all nuclear tests since 1954 when Nehru became the first world leader to propose it. Since then and through the next three decades, India had not changed its position, seeing a test ban as a way to slow down the nuclear arms race and making it a part of India's policy even in the 1980s (Mistry 1998). But the nuclear arms race and the mutual suspicion of the two superpowers meant that serious negotiations about a test ban had to wait until the Cold War was over. In 1994, during a state visit to the United States, Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao expressed New Delhi's support for a nuclear test ban, which was followed up by a formal statement of support for a test ban from the Indian representative at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva (Perkovich 1999: 347–8). But once again, India does not appear to have calculated the consequences of such a diplomatic posture as a test ban would have frozen at least some aspects of India's nuclear weapons development, with India having conducted only one atomic test, in 1974.

As the CTBT negotiations proceeded, India outlined several objections to the treaty, including the fact that it was not tied to nuclear disarmament, the onerous 'Entry into Force' (EIF) clause and the issue of sub-critical tests (Ganguly 1999: 169). The EIF clause (as finally adopted) would have required India to join the treaty for the treaty to come into force, a position that New Delhi correctly perceived would put India under great international pressure. And the fact that the CTBT would not prohibit sub-critical tests and computer simulations was seen as both hypocritical and disadvantageous since this would allow the more advanced nuclear powers to continue their nuclear weapons programmes while India did not possess the technology to avail itself of these options. But as Mistry notes, India's original position in 1994 on these issues was very different, including on the EIF provisions and the linkage to nuclear disarmament. These positions hardened in the aftermath of the 1995 NPT review conference, when to India's surprise, the NPT was renewed indefinitely (Mistry 1998: 29). In June 1996, India for the first time cited national security concerns and declared that it would not join the treaty.

Ultimately, though the EIF issue became the target of Indian ire, it could not have been the main problem because India had declared that it would not join the CTBT before the final 44-nation EIF clause was introduced into the CTBT (Mistry 1998: 30).

As with the NPT negotiations, it appears that India did not fully consider the implications of the CTBT on India's nuclear weapons programme until the prospects for the treaty's adoption grew. Voices both within and outside the government suggested that India conduct its test or tests before the treaty was concluded and then join the treaty (Perkovich 1999: 363–83 *passim*). And India does appear to have made preliminary preparations for a nuclear test at least twice during this period, though what exactly India intended to do remains unclear. The dominant explanation for India's rejection of the CTBT ties it to the renewal of the NPT which led to a change in India's negotiating position. But it is difficult to believe that New Delhi would have accepted any restrictions on its right to test at this stage, irrespective of what had happened with the NPT renewal. The opposition to the CTBT coalesced around anti-hegemonism and national autonomy, though this represented a negative consensus rather than necessarily support for nuclear weapons (Cohen 2002: 174–5). After the 1998 nuclear tests, there were half-hearted attempts by the government to reconsider Indian opposition to the CTBT but these did not bear fruit because domestic opposition, rooted in more than a decade of harsh rhetoric against the treaty, was unrelenting (Raja Mohan 2006: 19).

Though negotiations towards a treaty to stop fissile material production are yet to begin, India's position on the FMCT displays some unfortunate parallels with the CTBT and the NPT, suggesting possible difficulties if serious FMCT negotiations get under way. In 1993, India and the United States jointly supported a UN General Assembly resolution to stop the production of fissile material for weapons (Perkovich 1999: 338). As with the CTBT, the FMCT promises to at least slow down nuclear weapons development. But negotiations over the FMCT have been hampered by several issues, the most serious of which is whether the treaty should only stop future production or bring within its ambit existing stockpiles of fissile materials. On this issue, India's position is closer to that of the major nuclear powers, which are all opposed to counting existing stocks. But negotiations have not begun partly because the CD has been deadlocked since 1996 over various issues. Indeed, over the last several years, Pakistan has blocked any negotiations in the CD over its objections to the FMCT. This has allowed India to postpone serious consideration of the impact of such a treaty on India's security. Simply put, agreeing to a fissile material cut-off assumes that India has decided important questions about the size of its nuclear arsenal and the amount of additional or reserve fissile materials it needs for its weapons programme. Whether such critical decisions have been taken is not clear (Nayan 2010: 43–6).

Conclusion

Multilateral engagement is a necessary facet of diplomacy and potentially useful in advancing the national interest. This should have been particularly true for a country that deeply believes in a multilateral global order. Instead, multilateral diplomacy on nuclear issues has become an unnecessary millstone around India's neck, because of

India's chosen approach thereto. It has been paradoxical, demonstrating great faith and willing engagement as well as disappointment and estrangement. These are of course directly related: the disappointment and estrangement have been the consequence of untoward expectations from multilateral engagement.

Thus the key question is why India allowed multilateral approaches to take centre stage in a critical area of national security. The answer appears to be that multilateralism became the default option because the Indian leadership was unwilling to accept the short-term risk involved in taking responsibility for unilateral resolution of its security concerns. Instead, the hopes inspired by multilateral diplomacy became the means of occluding national security responsibilities, and this in spite of the risks involved, India's relative weakness in the international arena, and previous experiences with multilateralism that provided ample reason for caution.

India's multilateral strategy in this field has carried a heavy cost and India continues to pay the price. In addition to estrangement from critical global security regimes, it has complicated India's relationships with major global powers, reduced India's global influence, and endangered national security. It has also hobbled India's wider diplomatic game and international reputation. In particular, as India has switched from warm enthusiasm for negotiated approaches to wrecking tactics within those same negotiations as its security imperatives come into focus back home, India has inexplicably manoeuvred itself into the worst of all possible outcomes. And, meanwhile, all of this made unilateral security approaches to securing India's central security interests much more difficult and controversial, though ultimately unavoidable. Thus, the failure to conduct an atomic test in the 1960s and the failure to complete a required series of tests in the mid-1990s, both in deference to multilateral efforts, created far greater security problems than they resolved and made the ultimate resolution of India's security challenges even more difficult to engineer.

It is unclear if Indian policy has changed or whether India will repeat the same pattern in future forays into multilateralism, but there are unsettling indications that suggest that this might well be the case. How India will respond to the FMCT negotiations, whenever they begin, is one issue, but other serious new security challenges may surface as well. For example, some early hints suggest that an arms race could break out in outer space, with both China and the US conducting anti-satellite (ASAT) weapons tests. Multilateral efforts to head off such developments have also started but this is likely to lock in place the advantages of those who came first, just as in the nuclear arena. If India continues to emphasize multilateral approaches predominantly, this policy could lead to permanent disadvantage in a critical area. While multilateral negotiations and outcomes can buttress national efforts in the security arena, they cannot displace national security imperatives. The continuing problem for India in the nuclear arena is that a diplomatic negotiating method, multilateralism, has too often become for New Delhi a surrogate for a national security policy.

Notes

1. India also sought nuclear guarantees in addition to multilateralism (Schrafstetter 2002; Kennedy 2011).
2. On the Indian decision-making around the NPT, see Perkovich (1999: 125–39, *passim*), Karnad (2005: 208–75, *passim*), and Kennedy (2011).
3. Nehru's motivations remain controversial. For the most recent assessment, see Kennedy (2012) specifically chapter 12. The most comprehensive history of the Indian nuclear programme is Perkovich (1999). An alternative interpretation is offered in Karnad (2005).
4. On the US perception of this propaganda war, see Talbott (1989: 71–2); on parallel Soviet perceptions, see Anatoly Dobrynin's quote in Wittner (2009: 54).
5. A recent and sympathetic review of the RGAP points to this as the main reason for the initiative. See Report of the Informal Group on the RGAP 88 (2011: 14). Pakistan had begun 'cold tests' of a nuclear weapon design in the early 1980s, though an air deliverable nuclear weapon was available only by 1995 (Khan 2013: 186–90).
6. Beijing clearly saw the PTBT as an attempt to 'manacle China' (Lewis and Xue 1988: 193).

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CHAPTER 48

MULTILATERAL DIPLOMACY ON CLIMATE CHANGE

NAVROZ K. DUBASH AND LAVANYA RAJAMANI

Introduction

India's foreign policy on climate change is marked by tactical virtuosity, but increasingly by strategic vacuity. India has a history of punching above its weight in climate negotiations, and shaping key concepts and debates in the global negotiations. However, in more recent times, Indian diplomats and bureaucrats appear to be reacting to circumstances rather than shaping them. At root is a failure to appreciate the full spectrum of India's interests in global climate cooperation.

This chapter begins by tracing the evolution of India's climate diplomacy from the inception of the climate dialogue in the early 1990s to the ongoing negotiations for a 2015 climate agreement. Next, this chapter identifies the domestic and international drivers of India's climate diplomacy. And finally, given the evidence that emerges that India's climate diplomacy has proven less than optimal, this chapter makes a case for rethinking it.

Evolution of India's Climate Diplomacy

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

From the early days of the climate negotiations in 1990, India was instrumental in shaping the underlying principles of the emergent global regime.[1] Indian research

organizations played an important role in framing the climate problem as one of allocating rights to the global commons (Agarwal and Narain 1991; Dubash 2013b), and as a corollary argued that any allocation should be on the basis of equity. At the outset of negotiations in 1991, India stated: 'The problem ... is caused not by emissions of greenhouse gases as such but by *excessive levels* of per capita emissions of those gases ... It follows, therefore, that developed countries with high per capita emission levels are responsible for incremental global warming ... the principle of equity should be the touchstone for judging any proposal' (Dasgupta 2011: 89).

By the conclusion of the negotiations for the UNFCCC in 1992, India had helped formulate the position of the Global South along these lines. Building on the ideas articulated above, India had modified the IPCC's formulation of 'common responsibilities' across countries to 'common but differentiated responsibilities' reflecting the importance India placed on appropriately allocating responsibility across countries for causing the problem (Rajan 1997: 108). This bedrock principle was introduced in the UNFCCC and has fundamentally shaped the balance of responsibilities between developed and developing countries in the climate regime.

In addition to crafting the Convention on the basis of common but differentiated responsibilities, India worked with other developing countries to ensure that the negotiation process was held under the authority of the UN General Assembly through a specially constituted negotiating committee, judging that the UN framework would provide the best opportunity to articulate and defend its views. India also played a leading role in calling for new and additional funding and for creating a separate institutional mechanism for climate funding (Jakobsen 1998).

It is worth noting that these negotiations took place in the early 1990s, when the global political map was dominated by an ascendant West, post-Cold War. By contrast, developing countries had emerged from a decade of structural adjustment leading to perceptions and the reality of political and economic disempowerment. Prior efforts in the 1970s and 1980s to build new forms of global cooperation (for example, through 'global negotiations' and a New International Economic Order) to benefit the developing world had proven unsuccessful. Given the ensuing limited faith in the international system to safeguard the interests of the South, the emergence of environmental concerns as a new agenda was viewed with suspicion. The model of global environmental cooperation built on differentiated commitments by North and South, exemplified by the Montreal Protocol, however, proved attractive. This model of a 'firewall' built around differentiation with corresponding financial obligations was seen as a useful approach to defend Southern interests. The resulting climate regime was a product of its time, and India played a considerable role in crystallizing Southern concerns into the legal architecture and form of the UNFCCC.

The Kyoto Protocol

During the build-up to the Kyoto Protocol in the mid-1990s, India played a significant role in defending the notion of differentiated responsibility. These negotiations featured

growing pressure by vulnerable states for negotiation of a legally binding protocol, and from industrialized countries for 'advanced' developing countries to take on commitments. Faced with this situation, India convened a 'Green Group' of 72 countries to support the idea of a legally binding protocol, but without any additional commitments for developing countries (Sengupta 2011: 107). The combined negotiating strength of the group was adequate to persuade the European Union and other champions of a legally binding instrument that in order to win the support of the Green Group, they would have to proceed on the basis of differentiated commitments. Differentiated commitments in the Kyoto Protocol translated into 'no new commitments for developing countries'. (UNFCCC 1995). The Kyoto Protocol furthers the balance of responsibilities set out in the Convention by prescribing mitigation targets and timetables for developed countries and none for developing countries.

While India's negotiating position has largely been defined within a foreign policy frame, the one significant exception is India's position on the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) under the Kyoto Protocol. The CDM allows developing countries to generate and sell emission credits by undertaking greenhouse gas reduction projects. India initially opposed this proposal, so as to press for action within the industrialized world (Sengupta 2011: 107). However, Indian business interests, led by the Confederation of Indian Industry, recognizing business potential in the CDM, advocated that India embrace the mechanism, a position buttressed by research from Indian think-tanks (Das 2011: 251; Jakobsen 1998: 39). This revised position was reconciled with India's historical stance by asserting that India would only take on mitigation actions when they were financially supported to do so (Sengupta 2011). This episode is noteworthy because it is one of the few cases where domestic interests played a role in shaping foreign policy on climate change. (See also Rajiv Kumar's Chapter 18 in this volume on the private sector.)

The period from 2007 marked a new phase in the global climate negotiations process. The climate negotiations began addressing the future of the regime after the conclusion of the first 'commitment period' of the Kyoto Protocol (from 2008 to 2012). This period has three milestones: Bali in 2007, when a framework for negotiations was introduced—the Bali Action Plan; Copenhagen in 2009, when the effort to reach an 'agreed outcome' narrowly floundered, but was rescued by a Head of State level negotiated 'Copenhagen Accord'; and Durban in 2011, when a negotiating approach, the Durban Platform, was agreed upon. Throughout this period, a central and ongoing theme was whether negotiations would proceed on the basis of a unitary framework, or whether differentiated responsibility would drive the form and architecture of the proposed legal agreement (Rajamani 2012a: 615–20; Rajamani 2011b).

During this phase, large developing countries including India were pressed to articulate the conditions under and the forms in which they would undertake climate mitigation commitments (Dubash 2007, 2009a; Rajamani 2011a). For their part, India and other large developing countries pressed the industrialized countries to undertake enhanced commitments for the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol, and the United States (which has not ratified the Kyoto Protocol) to take on comparable commitments under a legally binding framework. Moreover, diplomatic pressures

outside the UNFCCC process also increased. Climate change became a regular feature of G8+5 and then the G-20 discussions and pronouncements, particularly in the build-up to the 2009 Copenhagen negotiations (Walsh 2009; Weisman 2009; G20 Information Centre 2011).

This period, with its heightened pressures, marked a turbulent phase in Indian climate politics and policy. During this period, the Indian government began experimenting with new formulations of its climate policy, often in reaction to external stimuli but occasionally in a proactive manner. In response to pressure at the G8+5, the Prime Minister announced that India's per capita emissions would never exceed those of the developed world (Ministry of External Affairs 2007). This stance is consistent with India's emphasis that long-term agreements should be based on per capita emissions. However, it represented a shift in that it introduced the notion of limits, albeit framed in per capita terms, and accounts for the historical responsibilities of developed countries, an aspect of the problem India has consistently sought to highlight. India's proposal, however, failed to arouse a significant response from other countries. Following a slew of voluntary pledges by other developing countries, notably China, on the eve of the Copenhagen COP in 2009, India announced a voluntary reduction in 'emissions intensity' of 20–5 per cent by 2020 from 2005 levels (Lok Sabha 2009; Sengupta 2011; Dasgupta and Sethi 2009; Krishnan 2009). India's voluntary target, as also those of other developing countries, was conditional on provision of financial support by donor countries (UNFCCC 2011). At the Cancun negotiations a year later, the voluntary conditional targets of India and others were captured in the UNFCCC process, albeit in information documents with limited legal status (Rajamani 2011a).

The Durban moment was particularly significant for India as it ceded ground on the extent to which the principle of common but differentiated responsibility would continue to define the UNFCCC regime. At Durban in 2011, parties launched a process titled the *Durban Platform on Enhanced Action* to negotiate 'a Protocol, another legal instrument or agreed outcome with legal force under the Convention applicable to all' (UNFCCC 2012a). This instrument is to be adopted in 2015 and implemented from 2020. India, until the final hours of the conference, had insisted that it could not agree to a legally binding instrument as it was a Cabinet-mandated red line. After a fast and furious 'huddle' in the final hours of the conference, however, India agreed to the ambiguous term, 'agreed outcome with legal force'. Unlike the terms 'Protocol' and 'another legal instrument' the term, 'agreed outcome with legal force' does not incontrovertibly signal a legally binding instrument. Nevertheless India's room for manoeuvre in negotiating the future climate regime has, through this decision, been significantly constrained, not just in terms of the legal form of the outcome of this process, which will likely be a legally binding instrument, but also in terms of the nature and extent of differentiation it contains in favour of developing countries. The Durban Platform decision, unusually so, does not contain a reference to equity or 'common but differentiated responsibilities'. This is no benign oversight. There were serious divisions on the interpretation and application of this principle between developed and developing countries. And, the safest way of avoiding a 'blood bath' over its reinterpretation was to

exclude a specific reference to the principle, but refer to the agreement being 'under the Convention' (Rajamani 2012b: 508). Media reports in many developed countries in the immediate aftermath of the Durban conference reported a paradigm shift from differentiation to symmetry (Friedman and Chemnick, 2011; Anon. 2011).

Nevertheless in the negotiations after Durban—in particular in Doha, 2012, and Warsaw, 2013, it became clear that differentiation—aspects of the agreement it will apply to, how it will apply, and between which countries or groups of countries—remains a central yet divisive issue in the negotiations. India has since Durban, aligned itself with a diverse group of countries that do not seem to share wide interests, including OPEC and Bolivarian Alliance (ALBA) countries, and China to form the Like Minded Developing Countries (LMDCs). These countries have little in common but a desire to retain differentiation—the 'firewall' as it were—in the climate regime. In this, however, the LMDCs are pitched against most other countries that believe a nuanced form of differentiation may lead to a more effective climate regime. In addition, India, with the help of the LMDCs is also arguing for a ban on unilateral trade measures, and addressing barriers to technology transfer, in particular intellectual property rights (UNFCCC 2012b).

Drivers of India's Climate Diplomacy

Although more than two decades have elapsed since the start of global climate negotiations, there has been relatively little evolution in domestic politics around climate change. There have, however, been some interesting developments in recent policy. A brief tour of Indian domestic climate politics suggests that only minimal political attention is devoted to the problem, the only scope for enhanced attention occurring when climate change is tightly linked to development concerns. It is an open question, however, whether the growing edifice of climate policy, often undertaken in response to international pressure, provides new spaces for articulation of climate interests.

Perspectives on Indian Climate Politics

Given pressing short-term domestic concerns over poverty, provision of basic services, and economic management, climate change has historically been a non-issue in Indian organized politics.[2] As a former Minister of Environment and Forests noted: 'Climate change as an issue is not a constituency mover' (Prabhu 2011: 232). Climate change has, however, received modest attention within the organized political system in the form of two debates in Parliament held before and after the 2009 Copenhagen COP (Prabhu 2011). In these debates, India's interests were constructed in terms of national space for development and not around an effective global climate agreement. However, attention

to local impacts by elected parliamentarians indicates a trend, however nascent, towards engagement with the issue in ways directly relevant to local constituents.

In another barometer of national politics, coverage of climate change in the English print media has been steadily increasing (Boykoff 2010; Jogesh 2011). In a study of English newspapers from September 2009 to March 2010, Jogesh found that global climate politics dominated the coverage (57 per cent) while domestic politics and policies accounted for 21 per cent thereof. Climate science and business stories accounted for 10 per cent and 5 per cent respectively. A common perspective was that emerging economies should do more, but in the context of leadership from industrialized countries and provision of support to do so.

This view is widely held, and is only changing slowly. Indian environmentalists view climate change as inextricably tied to concerns of equity (Kandlikar and Sagar 1999). Moreover, environmentalists are concerned that domestic environmental agendas risk being subverted by the climate agenda with problematic consequences, such as a climate-driven policy tilt towards nuclear power or plantation forestry, both contentious issues in India (Dubash 2009b). There has, however, been a slow progression towards a view that sees value in integrating climate change into a broader environmentalism inclusive of justice, local perspectives and development agendas, and climate science (Lele 2011; Dubash 2009b). Achieving this synthesis is still a work in progress.

The Indian business community has only recently become sensitized to the issue of climate change, but in partial and fragmented ways. In 1998, one observer described industry as 'unmobilized and uninvited' (Jakobsen 1998). More recently, the Confederation of Indian Industry weighed in to support India's Copenhagen voluntary emissions-intensity target, and has also participated in voluntary emissions disclosure initiatives (Das 2011). However, another business association, the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, denounced the target, arguing that any action by India and Indian industry should be linked to provision of finance (Dubash 2011). Importantly, neither set of views can claim to reflect the interests of the range of small and medium-sized enterprises in India.

To the extent there is any shift in domestic politics towards more explicit engagement with global cooperation on climate change, it comes from two narrative shifts. First, there is a growing awareness of climate-related damage and an attendant attention to climate adaptation. An increasing number of studies document and publicize climate impacts and costs. For example, one study conclusively finds cultivation of apples in the Himalayan belt is shifting to higher altitudes, a finding confirmed by both quantitative data and farmer perceptions (Singh Rana et al. 2011). The Government of India has also taken concrete measures to systematize data gathering on climate impacts (INCCA 2010) as well as encouraging states to systematically mainstream climate concerns into sectoral planning (Ministry of Environment and Forests 2010).

Second, there is growing agreement on the merits of a climate policy built around the pursuit of 'co-benefits'—measures that 'promote ... development objectives while also yielding co-benefits for addressing climate change effectively'—particularly driven by measures that promote energy security (NAPCC 2008: 2). The political priority given to

actions to address energy security, and the alignment of climate mitigation as a potential co-benefit of such action, has created the impetus for policies that have resulted in greenhouse gas (GHG) mitigation, although not labelled as such.

Somewhat contradictorily, climate policy has moved ahead of climate politics, facilitated in part by these two narrative shifts. Since 2008, India has developed a far-reaching National Action Plan on Climate Change, with eight subsidiary missions in areas as diverse as solar energy, water, and forests, and focused on the Himalayan belt (NAPCC 2008). By mid-2013, 22 states in India, according to the MOEF, had prepared or were in the process of drafting State Action Plans on Climate Change (Dubash and Jogesh 2014). While operationalization is slow in most cases, these plans represent a considerable edifice of climate policy, which appears out of keeping with underlying domestic politics.

The discrepancy is explained in part by the tendency for climate policy to be driven by global pressure at key moments, such as the Copenhagen COP. In addition, climate policy tends to privilege adaptation planning, which is consistent with a larger political stance that emphasizes early mitigation action by industrializing countries. And to the extent mitigation policy is included in plans, it is limited to measures that generate development co-benefits. An intriguing question is whether the emergent edifice of climate policy will create domestic constituencies—such as solar power developers, vulnerable coastal dwellers, or even bureaucrats responsible for climate policy implementation—for a shift in India's foreign policy stance on climate change. So far, Indian domestic climate politics has not been a powerful driver of its global stance. But new policy frameworks that are in some ways ahead of politics may lead to shifts in the existing patterns of Indian climate politics with effects for Indian climate diplomacy.

Capacities and Personalities

The world of climate policy-making has become ever more challenging, characterized by a number of sub-specializations, such as finance, low carbon development, forests, and trade, requiring competencies ranging from legal expertise, scenario building and modelling, and economics to broad diplomatic and negotiation skills. Moreover, much of the knowledge generation in global climate debates occurs through non-state actors, whether academics, NGOs, or international agencies. To influence and shape debates, norms and ideas requires extensive networking, involving both domestic and global constituencies.

Engaging this sprawling policy edifice is an onerous task requiring diverse capacity. Based on the limited information available on Indian climate policy-making and diplomatic capacity, Indian climate diplomacy does not appear to be built on a sufficiently robust base of knowledge, skills, and experience.

The first issue is simply one of numbers of people with sufficient skills engaged in climate policy-making. An analysis of the relevant ministries' websites in late 2013 suggests that the number of people supporting climate diplomacy is insufficient. The Ministry of External Affairs includes climate change among a range of economic and social issues

related to the United Nations. The nodal Ministry of Environment and Forests has a Joint Secretary (a senior official) working full time on climate change, supported by five others with technical capabilities. The Ministry of Finance has a dedicated climate cell with a principal adviser supported by two others. And sectoral ministries, such as the Ministry of Power, bundle climate change with other responsibilities. For example, the Joint Secretary responsible for climate change at the Ministry of Power also handles restructuring of electricity boards, transmission systems, rural electricity franchisees, and energy conservation and efficiency.

Second, the government-wide coordination mechanism for climate policy is unclear. During 2008–9, a special envoy within the Prime Minister's office assumed overall responsibility for climate diplomacy. However, following a tussle for control with the Ministry for Environment and Forests, this office was dismantled, leaving a vacuum, with turf issues re-emerging.

This limited capacity is thinly complemented by structured mechanisms for consultation, feedback, and advice. For example, a Prime Minister's Advisory Council on Climate Change has been established, but anecdotal evidence suggests it meets rarely.[3] The Ministry of Environment and Forests has established consultative groups on thematic issues, but these have proven to be short-lived. Informal consultations and contacts with think-tanks, academics, and NGOs occur sporadically but add little to overall capacity.

The challenge of developing and maintaining specialized networks is compounded by rapid turnover in the ministries. While the first two decades of climate policy-making in India were led by a small number of seasoned diplomats, who continued to play a substantial role post-retirement, recent Indian climate diplomacy has been characterized by several shifts in personnel leading to a loss of institutional memory, connection to networks, and personal ties, all of which are critical to effective climate diplomacy.

In certain phases of the negotiations, personality politics have also played a key role in shaping India's climate diplomacy. In the lead-up to and shortly after Copenhagen then Minister of State for Environment and Forests, Jairam Ramesh, sought to soften India's stance on emissions targets and review of domestic mitigation actions (Sethi 2010). This led to considerable discord among the negotiators, some of whom, including the Prime Minister's Special Envoy on Climate Change eventually resigned (Sethi 2009; Deshpande and Sethi 2010). As much as he was challenged domestically, Ramesh was feted internationally as a deal-maker who played a key role in facilitating talks and arriving at constructive outcomes. Indeed, the President of the Cancun Negotiations, Patricia Espinosa, singled him out for appreciation in her concluding remarks. Whether Ramesh changed only the tonal quality of India's pronouncements or its substance remains debated.

International Forces and Influences

Within the UNFCCC process, India often plays a tactically shrewd game, forging new alliances to adapt to shifting circumstances. Historically, India has been among the

leaders of the G-77/China group. Although the differences between the 132 members of the G-77/China, consisting of both the small island states and the OPEC countries, run deep, the group has until recently exhibited a tenuous yet tenacious cohesiveness. However, in the recent past, the more vulnerable developing countries have become disenchanted. Bangladesh has highlighted the 'vast differences' between large developing countries and the least developed countries (UNFCCC 2008: 8), inter alia highlighting a fault line in India's relationship with its immediate neighbours with whom it shares few negotiating interests and positions. The Alliance of Small Island States, along with the Least Developed Countries, constituting the world's most vulnerable to climate change, have also distanced themselves from many other members of the G-77/China, in particular the LMDCs and BASIC (Brazil, South Africa, India, and China). India with other large developing countries has begun to distinguish itself—in part as a reaction to the pressure brought to bear on 'emerging economies' to take on more stringent actions than the rest of developing countries. At Copenhagen, the BASIC group emerged as a distinct negotiating entity, forged a deal with the United States, shrunk the role of the EU and its Member States, and changed the character of the negotiating dynamics in the climate negotiations. As part of this deal, the BASIC countries agreed to more stringent mitigation actions as well as greater transparency, than the rest of the developing countries. The BASIC countries have since met at regular intervals at the ministerial level, produced statements, and initiated expert work on equity issues.

Although, the BASIC countries have come together as a result of a confluence (rather than active coordination) of interests, there are significant real and negotiating differences between them. And, these countries, while willing to negotiate together to stave off pressure from developed countries to take on stringent mitigation commitments, have also been willing to abandon their BASIC allies when it suits them. India argued alone at the end in Durban against a legally binding 2015 instrument. And, in Warsaw, India attacked proposals emerging from the Africa Group on an 'equity reference framework' that seeks to use a set of objective criteria including historical responsibility, development needs, and current capabilities, to determine fair shares for the parties (UNFCCC 2013; Rajamani 2013).

The differences within the BASIC that emerged in Durban—in particular with Brazil and South Africa willing to play a greater bridge role between the developed and developing countries—led to the emergence of the Like Minded Developing Countries discussed above. These countries, with their singular focus on retaining current forms of differentiation, and the 'firewall' in particular, have proven themselves to be effective 'blockers'.

While India has demonstrated tactical skill in aligning itself with BASIC when convenient, challenging individual BASIC members when necessary, and joining LMDCs for blocking power, as a strategy such opportunistic manoeuvring on coalitions may well prove ultimately detrimental to India's interests and credibility. First, the very fact that India has chosen different coalitions on different issues and to fulfil different needs suggests that India's interests diverge from its various negotiating partners. India is neither a good fit with the rest of the BASIC countries, as it is

more vulnerable and less GHG damaging than the rest, nor with the LMDCs, most of whom have other pervasive ideological and other reasons of their own to reject climate deal-making. These coalitions while transient and convenient, particularly with the LMDCs, may tarnish India's image and limit India's ability to shape the climate agenda. Many of the LMDCs, for instance, Bolivia, Cuba, Ecuador, Nicaragua, and Venezuela, albeit for arguably legitimate reasons, are known for their forceful resistance and brinkmanship in the negotiations, as evidenced in Copenhagen (Rajamani 2010). Some of them are members of OPEC and have an obvious interest in stalling progress on a climate deal. India, with its legitimate development and poverty-reduction imperatives and its focus on energy access and energy security, cannot but be tainted by association. India's entirely justifiable demand for equity will likely be conflated to its detriment with the questionable tactics and motives of these negotiating partners.

Global climate politics is, of course, not contained within the UNFCCC arena. In recent years, G-20 meetings and related forums such as the Major Economies Forum have also played an important role in influencing country positions, or in shaping the political space within which UNFCCC negotiations occur. The Prime Minister's offer to limit India's per capita GHG emissions to those of the industrialized world was made during a G8+5 meeting. A significant political agreement salient to the UNFCCC process—that the object of global negotiations would be to limit temperature rise to below 2 degrees Celsius—and one that aroused debate and criticism in India, was made during a subsequent G8+5 meeting. India's multilateral climate diplomacy requires coordination and preparation not only for UNFCCC meetings but also for other such global forums.

Finally, and harder to document, climate politics is embedded in larger foreign policy concerns, including bilateral relationships with key powers such as China and the United States. For example, the India-US nuclear deal of 2008 and India's bid to secure a permanent seat in the UN Security Council may have played a role in the framing of India's climate diplomacy, but it is unclear how exactly India's climate diplomacy has been affected by these larger foreign policy preoccupations.

Rethinking India's Approach to Climate Multilateralism

India's approach to climate diplomacy, particularly in recent years, has proven less than optimal. India's focus in the climate negotiations over the years has been to stave off stringent mitigation commitments that might affect the country's development prospects. While it has been reasonably successful thus far on this front, it is becoming clear that it may not be successful for much longer, and, more broadly that this strategy may not best serve India's long-term interests.

The wariness India has demonstrated in relation to stringent mitigation commitments is not entirely misplaced. India is placed 136th on the Human Development Index (UNDP 2013), 22 per cent of its population lives below the poverty line (Government of India 2013) and an estimated 33 per cent does not have access to electricity (Government of India 2011). If India's current growth rate continues, however, energy demand will increase exponentially. In addition, if India's targets on poverty, unemployment, and literacy are to be met, and electricity provided to those without it, much greater energy use will ensue.[4] Although India's current energy use generates a low per capita emissions rate of 1.7 metric tons annually (World Bank 2013),[5] and a cumulative global share of 4.3 per cent (JRC/PBL 2012), it will soon be a significant contributor to climate change. Stringent mitigation targets at the international level may well prove difficult for India to deliver on, hence the quest for an *equitable* climate deal that takes India's priority needs into account and has tailored and feasible mitigation targets for India.

However, India is also one of the most vulnerable to climate change. In the words of Jairam Ramesh, 'no country in the world is as vulnerable, on so many dimensions, to climate change as India. Whether it is our long coastline of 7000 kms, our Himalayas with their vast glaciers, our almost 70 million hectares of forests (which incidentally house almost all of our key mineral reserves)—we are exposed to climate change on multiple fronts' (INCCA 2010: 9). India's economy is also likely to be significantly impaired by the impacts of climate change. India therefore has an interest in also ensuring that there is an *effective* climate deal that meets the objective of limiting temperature increase to 2°C. At the root of India's problematic approach to climate change is an exclusive emphasis on an equitable deal without adequate attention to an effective deal, and the more complex negotiation strategy required to achieve both.

India has recorded success thus far in staving off stringent mitigation commitments. Developed countries have been seeking since the Convention was adopted to expand the net of countries with mitigation targets. India, with BASIC and the LMDCs, has yet to give way on the 'firewall' between binding developed country targets and voluntary developing country actions. But the terms of the debate have changed nevertheless. India lost ground in the Durban negotiations that resulted in shifting the parameters of the debate on differentiation and diluting the centrality of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities in the climate regime. Further, while India has been effective in a 'blocking' role, it does not yet have any concrete proposals on equity on the table. And, until it does, it cannot ensure that commitments in any future agreement are tailored to suit its needs.

India has rejected concrete proposals on equity from its negotiating partners, as for instance the principle-based reference framework proposed by the Africa Group—a revealing tactic. India's fair share, under any set of objective criteria—due to its lack of historical responsibility, low per capita GHG emissions, low GDP per capita, and enduring developmental and poverty challenges—would entail a modest and manageable effort. India's defence of equity cannot but ring hollow if it chooses to give developed countries a free pass on equity rather than subject itself to an equity assessment. India appears not only to be using equity as a shield to defend itself against GHG

commitments but also offering developed countries cover behind this shield (Rajamani 2013). If it continues along this path, future climate agreements will likely be neither effective nor equitable.

While India has found allies when necessary, it has begun to alienate many traditional allies such as the Least Developed Countries and Africa Group, with whom India shares much in common. It has also placed itself, perplexingly so, in a position, where despite its many legitimate and priority needs and concerns, it has attracted negative attention for its brinkmanship (Durban), negotiating tactics (Warsaw), and its opportunistic alliances with disruptive forces.

If India is to play a constructive role in reaching an effective and equitable global climate deal in 2015 and beyond—which would be in its interests—New Delhi needs to engage in a serious rethink of the content and strategy of its climate diplomacy.

Notes

1. Some parts of this section are drawn from Dubash (2013a).
2. Some parts of this section are drawn from Dubash (2013b).
3. Information received under the Right to Information Act 2005 reveals that seven meetings have been held from 2007 to 2009. See Prime Minister's Office, Letter to Mr Manu Sharma, 2009. <http://www.climaterevolution.net/images/rti/rpypm0003-1.gif> and <http://climaterevolution.net/images/rti/rpypm0003-2.gif>.
4. See Planning Commission (2006: xiii, and 18–32), noting that to sustain 8 per cent growth through 2031 India would need to increase its energy supply by 3–4 times, and its electricity supply by 5–6 times.
5. The global average is 4.9 metric tons rate. China's is 6.2, the United States' is 17.6, Australia's 16.9 and Canada's 14.6. See World Bank (2013).

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PART VII

LOOKING AHEAD

CHAPTER 49

INDIA'S RISE

The Search for Wealth and Power in the Twenty-First Century

SUNIL KHILNANI

Introduction

Modern states are shaped by assessments of future threats, opportunities, and risks. Faced with uncertainties about the future, they seek to increase predictability in their relations with other states—through the pursuit of economic growth that may help build interdependencies, through political and military alliances, and through accumulation of their own power in order to achieve dominance over or equality with other states. This, the domain of external power or foreign policy, above all demands a future-oriented outlook and a single-minded conception of interest. But modern states, especially those whose well-spring of legitimacy is democratic in character, are also compelled to attend to the immediate needs, preferences, and passions of their citizenry: a requirement that can both obscure clarity about the future, and mock claims to pursue a settled and singular interest of state.

The 50-odd chapters in this volume examine the efforts by India's political and policy leaders to devise such a future-oriented policy, in relation to a changing international arena and in the face of an evolving democratic polity. Together, the chapters trace the historical origins and evolution of the Indian state's engagement with the world, identify the actors, institutions, partnerships, and domestic imperatives shaping its actions, and map the international arenas and often turbulent geopolitical space over which India has sought to pursue its goals.

Does this trove of scholarly analysis reveal a story of cumulative pursuit to acquire and exercise external power and to establish India's place in the world—that's to say, a discernible *strategy*, understood as the intentional accumulation of external power in order to achieve defined long-term ends? And does such a strategy underpin India's

myriad policy responses, whether concerning the management of bilateral relations through diplomacy, the engagement in multilateral institutions, the pursuit of security through nuclear and conventional weaponry, the episodes of war and intervention, or the expansion of new interests in economic growth and maritime reach? Or does the survey of India's foreign policy across seven decades tell merely of the befuddled routines of a state, caught between ambition and limited capacity, unclear about its interests, entrapped by the many particular and shifting interests of the vast, diverse society over which it seeks to govern, and buffeted by the contingencies of a volatile neighbourhood?

Answers to such questions will vary depending both on the inquirer's explanatory interests—on what exactly they wish to understand—and on the values they bring to bear in their inquiry. As such, any answer will be essentially contestable (Gallie 1956; MacIntyre 1972; Taylor 1967). But there is a prior, framing question that every response, whatever its ideological or methodological predilections, will need to address with as much analytic clarity as possible. Put bluntly: what is the story of India's foreign policy the story *of*? Three distinct, if related, perspectives might be identified. In the first instance, it could be told as the story of a state, able to define its own interests, and confident if not always successful in pursuit of those interests. It might also be seen as the progress through international history of the democratically expressed economic and development needs of a large, poor citizenry. Finally, it might be seen as the attempt to assert the civilizational values of a renascent nation—values subject to differing interpretation by different leaders in turn influenced by their own ideologies, asserting, for example, either India's exceptional diversity or its urge for a more singular identity derived from ideas of religion or culture.

Two developments have given greater importance to such considerations. India's steady economic growth across the decades from the 1980s into the new century gave the Indian state more resources than ever before, and raised possibilities that it might embrace a more ambitious international role—that it might finally become able to support its long-standing desire to be recognized as a major power with real capacities. The rise in India's economic profile coincided with changes in the global distribution of power—which have made the early twenty-first century an era of geopolitical anxiety and uncertainty. The twentieth century ended with the United States in an apparently unassailable position of power. America had triumphed in a four-decades-long conflict against its rival superpower, the USSR, and the American model of a globalized economy, sophisticated and wide-ranging military capacity, and legitimacy based on democratic norms, appeared without challengers. But that assessment of US dominance underwent swift revision in the first decade of the twenty-first century. The post-9/11 US actions in Iraq and Afghanistan, the prolonged financial crisis that began in 2008, and global awareness of US surveillance and data accumulation practices further to the Wikileaks and Edward Snowden revelations of, respectively, 2010 and 2013, together diminished the United States' military, economic, and political standing across the world, even as the United States itself pulled back from long-standing global security commitments. China, meanwhile, steadily increased its economic power, converting wealth into military capabilities coupled with strategic design as it moved to assert

territorial and maritime claims and expand its global footprint. These decades also saw the rise of a clutch of new claimants to international power across the world, and the emergence of numerous non-state actors with the ability to damage and check the plans of more powerful states, which further complicated the existing definitions and calculus of power.

India's Rise: Three Perspectives—Statesmanship and the Vicissitudes of Judgement

At independence, India possessed the most cosmopolitan political elite to be found in any non-Western society—alongside a citizenry the vast majority of whom were non-literate and most of whom would have hardly travelled a few miles beyond their birth place. That national elite moved fast to establish India as a democracy founded upon universal suffrage, with a constitution that distributed powers widely across the branches and strata of government. (It yielded to Parliament, for instance, the sole authority to agree to any alterations of India's territorial boundaries. Given at once the ambiguities of India's post-imperial boundaries, and the public passions that came to be invested in maintaining them, this would prove a particularly awkward bind on executive discretion in negotiating with dissatisfied neighbours.)

Yet, the immense gap between elite and mass horizons ensured that the domain of external power largely came to be the preserve of the executive. For most of the first six decades of India's independence, the formulation and conduct of foreign policy remained mostly beyond the purview of the electorate and the attention of Parliament—the exception being in times of war: defeat in 1962, victory in 1971 (but cf. Chaudhuri in this volume). The result was a national leadership that enjoyed comfortable—if never total—insulation from domestic pressures when it came to defining the content and purpose of external power. The decisive constraints that leaders faced lay in the limits of India's capacities—especially military and economic—relative to other states.

Those practical constraints did little to curb the soaring international goals India's leadership set for the newly-independent, impoverished country. Those goals were rooted in political self-belief about India's rightfully growing importance in the world—based on its human scale, its civilizational depth and history, and its commitment to morally defensible forms of action. It was a view most coherently articulated by India's first Prime Minister and first Foreign Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru.

Nehru aspired to a long-range understanding of India's interests and place in the world. India was relatively weak when assessed in conventional terms of power, which made it more difficult to maintain a commitment to non-dependence on outside powers. It could better hope to do this by taking advantage of India's scale—itself a proxy for

power when allied to other factors—as well as exploiting the legitimacy it had acquired through its non-violent freedom struggle and the subsequent democracy it established. Integral to Nehru's long view were two judgements about the future. Nehru was trying to think outside the frame of the Cold War, and rightly judged that Asia would be among the most important regions both for India and the world; and judged further that within Asia, China would be the most significant country for India.

India had to engage with a world order skewed against its interests; and it had to try to turn the enormous asymmetries between the superpowers and India to the latter's advantage through political means. Asymmetries of power in the international power domain have often prompted two kinds of response: a desire on the part of the less powerful to emulate and 'catch up', or the resort to narratives of victimhood that can nourish nationalism and nativist yearnings, or provoke violent disruption associated with terrorism or 'rogue states'. But the Indian response to power asymmetries was different. While it did invest in building its own capacities, it tried to turn its relative weakness in conventional power into grounds for normative claims that might give it a hearing and even decisive influence in the international arena. So, by refusing to participate in international regimes and rule systems whose terms countries like India had no say in determining (or later, for example, by trying to expand conceptions of fairness and equity through principles such as that of 'common but differentiated responsibilities'), India hoped to acquire space to pursue its interests.

India managed in its early years to be an international actor endowed with some efficacy because it stuck with an alternative conception of the international order—which led it to decline the invitation to join alliances dominated by the more powerful. Such alliances, Nehru believed, would perpetuate the cycle of war and domination that he saw as characteristic of a twentieth century ruled by Western power. But Nehru's was never a simple anti-Western critique—it was an attempt to create a more expansive universalism, which generalized more equitably to all states the norms proclaimed by the West itself. In this, he was quite distinctive from the anti-Western rejections of the international order to be found among many twentieth-century anti-colonial movements (cf. from a considerable literature on non-Western critiques of the international order: Aydin 2007; Maneula 2009; Mazower 2009; Conrad 2010; Duara 2001; and cf. Huntington 1996).

Despite severe constraints, there were successes notched during this period. And there was a political logic underpinning these successes that made them not merely contingent. But this logic was sufficiently distant from and unconnected to the conceptual impulses of the academic discipline of International Relations, as it was then emerging and subsequently developed, that India's policy was seen as no more than ornery behaviour (on the rise of the discipline and its early influential figures see Guilhot 2011; Scheuermann 2009; Gaddis 2012). The broader political logic came to be condensed in the notion of 'non-alignment'—a term always problematic, prone to partial understanding and to decay into doctrinal sanctimony. The term took its sense from the polarities of the Cold War, yet it would be mistaken to see the argument embodied in the term as limited to the historical moment of its inception (cf. Tellis, this volume). Though

devised in the polarized environment of the Cold War, it always pointed to an ambition, an intention, to define another sort of world order. To understand that logic, one needs to delve deeper into what Nehru was intending to accomplish.

Nehru's approach to positioning India in the world was less the product of philosophical idealism, more an effort to minimize risks. Its unraveling in 1962, when China defeated India in a short, sharp border war, both buried his approach and introduced a several-decades-long hiatus in India's foreign policy and strategy, especially towards Asia. The successes of the Nehru years came to be seen as historical and contingent; while the failures came to be seen as rooted in fundamental misconceptions. But in fact the elements of his thinking offered an intellectual template for India's rise, an attempt to work out something like a strategy, which preceded by more than half a century India's actual rise. And as Asia at the beginning of the twenty-first century moves once again towards an embrace of nationalism, militarization, and alliance systems, those may be insights from an earlier historical moment worth recalling. For Nehru's approach emerged out of recognition of the realities of Asian nationalism—in particular Chinese nationalism, with its inclination to expansionism most evident in its annexation of Tibet in 1951, and the threat this raised of wider conflict (see Khilnani 2012 for elaboration of the argument below).

To Nehru, notions of Asian solidarity and of pan-Asianism—a legacy of the earlier twentieth century founded on opposition to the West and on legends of Asia's civilizational solidarities—were rhetorically potent but unstable and unsustainable in practice. From the late 1940s he was searching for a different understanding of an Asia that was rapidly becoming a continent of new and aspiring states, where notions of civilizational self-esteem and historical injury allied with the new instrumentalities of state power, in potentially ominous ways. He had, after all, learned this broader lesson about the fragility of aspired unities in his own backyard—with the creation of Pakistan.

As Nehru tried, in the first years of independence, to make sense of Asia and India's place within it, his interlocutors were scientists and strategists—not the poets and philosophers of Asian solidarity. He had extensive conversations on questions of defence and atomic security with the physicist Patrick Blackett, inviting him to advise on India's defence needs. He met with the military strategist Basil Liddell Hart, and told him that in the long term, as China became more 'Chinese' and nationalist, it would pose a threat to India's eastern frontiers. To counter this, India needed to develop arms and military capabilities, but for the foreseeable future it would have to defend its interests and maximize its bargaining positions through politics and policy—a policy of what Liddell Hart noted as 'semi-neutrality' and 'non-alignment'. To another Western naval theorist, Nehru offered his own view of Asia's future. Asia contained at least four powerful blocs: the Chinese, the Indian, the Near East, and Soviet Asia. United by common opposition to Europe, they remained alien to one another. When that external factor that temporarily united them should cease to operate, the conflicts between them—already perceptible—would break out openly. Deeper understanding between these Asian worlds was something to hope for; but it would take time, and meanwhile catastrophes threatened. The statesman

was faced with the challenge of finding practical actions to address the instabilities of the situation.

Nehru's international policies through the 1950s were in large part an effort to devise a set of practical actions tailored to India's long-term interests—and in light of its limited present capacities. Unlike Mahatma Gandhi, Nehru was never a pacifist, and he willingly acknowledged the utility of force and violence, when calibrated with care (Raghavan 2010). But his thinking was driven by the goal of keeping Asia at peace after decades of conflict. Avoiding war was essential for India's internal development, as was keeping Asia disentangled from security alliances—which would only circumscribe the independence of the continent's new states. But above all, for Nehru wars and the escalation they entailed had to be avoided so as to avert thermonuclear catastrophe. In his view, the thermonuclear age that dawned in the mid-twentieth century fundamentally changed the nature of war. If previously war could be seen as an instrument of policy and politics, now it threatened to make politics impossible, literally obliterating it.

Nehru opposed military alliances, especially in Asia. At a time when the United States was working to create security organizations across the Asian continent in order to hem the advance of communism, Nehru resisted, fearful that they would only draw Asians into the alliance grid maps of the Cold War. Equally he was concerned that wars were working to spread China's influence across Asia: from Korea to Indochina, that influence was inching closer to India—and needed to be halted. It was in India's interests to keep China from extending its sway over Asia's smaller, weaker states, and to get it to respect the identities of the new, small sovereign states that were emerging with the retreat of Western colonialism. To attempt this by means of military alliances designed to contain China was a counter-productive strategy. China had to be induced to cooperate in other ways. Since it remained outside the United Nations and loosely integrated into what it saw as an imperialist-made system of international law, its commitment to liberal principles of state sovereignty had to be secured by other means.

In Europe, the idea of the sovereign state had been realized through a long and painful history of war and conflict. Nehru hoped Asia might avoid that process, not least because such a process would leave an already poor India further depleted of both domestic and international resources to aid its development. Thus his practice in the early years of independence was aimed at creating the conditions for an Asia of sovereign states to emerge—one achieved not through war, not defined by spheres of influence, and not secured by military alliances guaranteed by larger powers. Such a system was justified on the grounds of self-determination. And it was also the most effective way to secure India's own interests, given Nehru's uncertainties about China's push for widening ideological influence and its historical tendencies towards expansion.

It was the need to address those uncertainties—rather than an unguarded idealism or sentimental sense of Asian brotherhood—that shaped Nehru's engagement with China in the mid-1950s. The Panchsheel agreement struck between China and India in 1954, for instance, was a key to maintaining Asia as a 'zone of peace'. For him, apart from structuring the relationship between China and India, the 'Five Principles' embodied

in the agreement provided a template by which large states could be convinced to recognize the sovereignty of new and smaller states in Asia—particularly those that China was accustomed to thinking of as part of its own 'Sinocentric' sphere of influence (which was how China viewed Tibet and the states of Indo-China). Nehru therefore made explicit his desire that China extend the agreement beyond India, to cover its relations with Burma, Indochina, and other smaller Asian countries.

Meeting with Mao in the mid-1950s, Nehru further articulated elements of his conception—in stark opposition to Mao's expressed views. China and India's huge human scale, he told Mao, gave each of them power of a different kind, a power that distinguished them from the West. Equally, it was their scale that filled the smaller countries of Asia with apprehension and encouraged them to look to other powers—like the United States—for protection. The emergence of China and India as nation states of unprecedented size, Nehru reckoned, was enabling an inevitable shift in global power towards the Asian giants. That was inducing anxiety even in the world's more powerful states. European power had weakened significantly, and even the United States—with all its extraordinary military and financial might—feared losing its pre-eminence. To Nehru, a state acting in the grip of fear was more likely to act imprudently—action that might lead to war.

Nehru was indeed trying to devise something like his own conception of a balance of power, based not on European ideas of security alliances, but on a conception appropriate to India's interests and capacities, and to the Asian context. India had certainly to develop its conventional and military powers, a process that in view of India's economic choices would be gradual; but given the asymmetries of the international order, it had also to find new definitions of power. Historically, most neutral powers had been small (like Sweden, or Switzerland), and their neutrality had little or no international impact. Nehru's insight was to recognize that if India could combine its immense scale with a position of what he sometimes referred to as positive neutrality or non-alignment, this would help to maximize its international power. If a large state kept away from alignments, it could introduce and keep in play a beneficial uncertainty in the international system. It was a point that had been well grasped by one of Nehru's most trusted foreign policy officials, Giraja Shankar Bajpai, who had noted that 'an uncertain equipoise of power between political combatants can introduce a certain element of caution regarding the attitude of neutrals into [the] calculations [of the major powers] and thus prevent an outbreak of hostilities' (Bajpai 1952: 36).

Nehru *did* create a beneficial uncertainty in the crucial years when the post-war map of Asia was being negotiated. But his perspective, in its ambition to secure longer-term benefits to India, could lead to short-term missteps. Indeed, his chief and fatal misjudgement manifested itself in his approach to China—his underestimation of Mao's ability to use a short war to strike home a political point. Statesmen and scholars have been trying to judge China's intentions and capacities accurately ever since—and it remains an open question if there has been any marked improvement in judgement between Nehru's time and our own efforts to judge how China will act.

Growth as Strategy

A second narrative about India's rise is built around the surge in the country's economic growth rates that began in the last decade or so of the twentieth century. India was a leading beneficiary of a rebalancing of the global economy, from the West towards Asia. The size of its economy expanded from $287 billion in 1991 to $1.87 trillion in 2014, and international trade as a percentage of GDP grew from 13.6 per cent in 1991 to 42.1 per cent in 2013 (all figures in nominal terms: see International Monetary Fund 2014 and World Bank 2014).

India's annual growth rates, which since 1996 have averaged a little under 7 per cent, have undoubtedly given the state many more resources (Government of India Planning Commission 2014). Total revenue collection (direct and indirect taxes) alone increased more than ten-fold between 1995 and January 2013 (Government of India Department of Revenue 2014), one of the sources that allowed military expenditure to increase from under $17 billion in 1991 to $47 billion in 2014 (SIPRI 2014). The expansion of India's economy to a value, in absolute terms, of over $5 trillion (in PPP figures) has made India the third largest economy in the world as of 2014—overtaking Japan (IMF 2014). Such growth has helped to give India a place in organizations such as the G-20, and gained it the attention of international financial investors and other major economies which look to it as a market and as a supplier of services and labour.

The accumulation of material power expanded the range of foreign policy choices available to India, and gave its elites a heightened sense of India's international status (Nilekani 2009: 120). A new narrative of India's rising power gathered around these developments in the economy.

This narrative places its faith in economic growth, and in its continuance, as a means to displace and even resolve political problems. It encouraged a discounting of political risks—whether posed by geopolitical and regional conflict, terrorism, domestic social tensions, institutional weakness, or corruption. The prospect of continued growth fostered a belief that such problems could be dissolved by economics. The discipline of the market, and of rationality induced by the demands of economic trade and exchange, would lead external antagonists to work to resolve conflicts, and would also enable domestic institutional reform. The 'Manmohan Singh Doctrine' made economic diplomacy the centrepiece of foreign policy, in the belief that it could lower and even dissipate tensions with Pakistan and across the region. The attempt to anchor such policies in a theoretical perspective led some to advocate the notion of 'geoeconomics' to define India's strategy and foreign policy: the opportunities of global markets and the drive to growth should guide the state's policies (see Baru 2006 for a strong statement of this view; for an external perspective, Vickery 2011).

Economic growth and a large and diverse economy are certainly necessary preconditions of power, and are also essential to ensure the welfare and development of the citizenry. In that sense, growth is a basic component of India's rise. But it's less clear how economic growth could provide the strategic basis for India's rise. Even if India were to

achieve a consistent annual growth rate of say 9 per cent over the next two decades, its per capita income in 2025 would still only be around $8–10,000.

In fact, both the magnitude and the pattern of India's economic growth are framed by and inseparable from political issues. In particular, there exist deep challenges to the sustainability of India's economic growth pattern: challenges that are domestic and social; global market ones; and planetary ecological ones. None of these can be solved or overridden by economic growth itself. They will require political solutions, which in their nature will be difficult to craft, to deliver into agreement, and to enforce.

Take first of all India's current domestic economic model, which has been described as 'disequalizing' in its effects (Walton 2012). Economic growth is reproducing and accentuating inequalities, leading to a concentration of wealth, privileges, and opportunities. The numbers of very rich rose rapidly during India's boom years until 2011 or so, and inequalities have also grown in how risks are distributed, in regional and sectoral disparities, and in human capital (Walton 2012).

While the functioning of India's electoral democracy may well generate political pressures towards redistribution—and will require the state to increase spending to address such pressures—dissent and dissatisfaction could also spill beyond the electoral arena, exacerbating risks to internal security. Large-scale internal police and paramilitary operations have become a chronic feature of India's security policies. Such actions raise fundamental constitutional and rights issues, and their uncurbed and indefinite continuance will damage India's international standing and legitimacy. The potential hindrance to India's international ambitions is considerable, and this set of issues cannot be addressed purely by economic means. It will require political skills to find resolution (Khilnani et al. 2013).

Second, India's economic growth model assumes continuing international commitment to a basic market liberal value: the collective and systemic benefits that flow from growing integration of the global economy. Yet that commitment has come to seem something of a fair-weather friend, set aside in times of economic adversity. While the national economies of developed states are vulnerable to determined protectionism, that has not slowed their eagerness to create regional trading blocs and free trade areas, along with greater regulation of markets—which place in jeopardy the ideal of global free trade. After a period in the late twentieth century when developed economies took a benign view of globalization, and encouraged China and India to integrate more fully with the global economy, now the likes of China and India look threatening to the prosperity and welfare models of the Western economies. Trade and economic relations do increasingly appear as a zero-sum game, with the growth of the emerging economies seen as eroding the well-being of the West, whether in terms of jobs, environmental conditions, or access to resources. It may be premature to speak of 'reverse globalization'; but it would be equally mistaken to assume the inevitable expansion or stable presence of globalization in its current form.

Indeed, as India's economic expansion pushes it to integrate further with the world economy, it is likely to face resistance from Western states seeking to defend their

acquired gains (Calleo 2009: 107, and 156–7). American and European strategies to maintain their economic lead are driven by investment in technology and human capital: the European Union's Lisbon Strategy of 2000, for instance, has pledged to increase R&D investment to 3 per cent of GDP. The Asian wager, on the other hand, has been on pricing. But it is by no means clear that an economic model based on low wages and suppression of domestic demand can sustain economic growth and the accumulation of external power. This is especially questionable if, unlike China, the state is a democracy, and if the international economy is still dominated by states that are decreasingly tolerant of a global economy based on structural imbalances (Brenner 2006).

Third, India's economic growth model replicates the pattern of high natural resource consumption and energy use that has been the hallmark of the developed economies. According to World Bank estimates, the annual cost of environmental degradation in India amounts to about Rs. 3.75 trillion ($80 billion) equivalent to 5.7 per cent of GDP (World Bank 2013). Yet, given the scale of the Indian economy and its needs, this pattern of energy use is environmentally unsustainable—both in terms of local environmental degradation and global climate change effects. While India has real incentives to act on its own ecological degradation, the incentives are weaker when it comes to the more vaguely identifiable effects of global climate change—even if all projections of these effects show India and South Asia to be especially vulnerable (see UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 2014).

To wager on economic growth as a way of bypassing political problems is a risky strategy. It is particularly risky to build a foreign policy around such a wager. A backward glance at history serves as a reminder that faith in economics as a way of trying to circumvent or manage problems of politics has not had happy results: the experience of the twentieth century has quite amply shown the capacity of politics to undermine the rationalizing hopes of economics.

That lesson is particularly relevant in the context of early twenty-first century Asia. In contrast to Europe's post-1945 experience, Asia's greater economic integration has coincided with sharper political competition, surging nationalisms, and the highest rates of militarization in the world. More than half of Asia's trade is with itself, part of the dynamism that enables its economies to produce a quarter of the world's GDP. Yet that economic surge based on interdependencies has also enabled Asian states in the early twenty-first century to ratchet up their military spending: the defence expenditures of Asia's major military powers—China, India, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan—virtually doubled during the new century's first decade (cf. International Institute for Strategic Studies 2014). And Asia, already the world's most heavily nuclearized region, continues to build its nuclear arsenal.

The Asian continent is poised on the verge of a second age nationalism. In the twentieth century, Asian nationalisms were largely directed against European empire and the United States; now, Asia's local nationalisms are increasingly directed against each other.

The Obduracy of Raison d'état

A third perspective sees India's rise as projected through the cumulative pursuit of state interests. It sees these interests as defined primarily by enduring geopolitical imperatives, and driven by India's growing capacity to advance these interests.

In its strongest version, this account takes seriously a classical conception of the sovereign state: as an autonomous actor, endowed with unitary will and intention. It sees the Indian origins of such an entity as dating back to the British Raj, and traces the emergence, from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, of a state claiming political authority over large areas of the subcontinent, and mobilizing resources in pursuit of external goals. Though a creation of British imperial interests, the Raj developed its own regional foreign policy—distinct from and sometimes in tension with British foreign policy emanating from London. The mid-twentieth-century shift in the state's legitimating principle, from imperial to democratic will, did not entail any fundamental change in the state's external interests.

It is a line of argument that can be found among both opponents and advocates of India's rise. Chinese strategic assessments of India, for instance, have since the Mao era viewed India's external policies as continuous with British imperial ambitions. India's claim to what China considers undemarcated territories and its desire to create 'buffer' zones, for example through compliant governments in Nepal and Bhutan, its pursuit of hegemony within the South Asia region, and its efforts to control maritime access through the Indian Ocean—all are viewed as persistent emanations of British India's external policy (Cohen, this volume; Muni on Nepal this volume, Scott on the Indian Ocean, this volume).

Indian advocates of this perspective put a more positive spin on such perceived continuities. They too highlight the long-range continuity in state interests from colonial imperatives to the policies of the post-1947 state—and urge upon Indian policy elites a candid recognition of these continuities (Raja Mohan, this volume and his publications more generally). Such views see the subcontinent as possessing a geopolitical unity, dominated by India which can rightfully claim sway over a space stretching from Aden to Malacca. It follows that outside powers must be prevented from interfering in the region, and that India must develop maritime capabilities to control the Indian Ocean area. Greater US disengagement from the Persian Gulf and possibly the wider Middle East would validate this view. Further, given India's large military surplus in human terms, it should assume a more active and interventionist role in international peacekeeping and conflict resolution, a contemporary version of its capacity to supply expeditionary forces during the British Empire. If in the immediate post-1947 decades the Indian state lacked the material capacities or resources to pursue such a range of interests, recent economic growth has enhanced those capacities. Further, a willingness to enter into partnership with powers like the United States can also give India more room to pursue its own geopolitical imperatives.

This 'neo-Curzonian', post-colonial argument sees the Indian state as in possession of a stable set of rational interests across time. It is a view that provides the firmest foundation on which to develop an Indian reason of state perspective. But, since the mid-twentieth century, the Indian state has been a democratic one. If for long it had for all practical purposes a monopoly over the interpretation of its own external interests, that monopoly was always a contingent one, lacking any normative anchor. Over time, that monopoly claim has come to be challenged by the workings of democratic political competition. If the gap between the cosmopolitan elite and the provincial masses that characterized India at independence effectively excluded the latter from having their interests represented within the state, that has been changing rapidly. In parallel, political contestation across India's federal architecture and the dynamism of its economy have both brought more players with external interests into the policy arena—all competing to advance their own claims to define the legitimate goals of the Indian state.

There is in fact a gap between the classical and somewhat abstract specification of the state—as an organized concentration of public power—and its actualized form. Every existing state is much harder to characterize. Apart from the conception of the state as an actor possessed of a unified rational will, with the capacity to make calm assessments about the future and to advance its own interests (the favoured conception of raison d'état), there are at least two other working images of the state. The second conception sees the state as an arena of struggle between competing interests and elite groups and their supporters, each seeking to further its own narrow interests (this is an image commonly found in political science, with its theories of state-capture by interest groups). A third conception pictures the state as a much more weakly intentional actor, whose actions are motivated by confusion, inattention, panic, greed—a jumble of short-term interests and impulses, on the part of both office holders and those who placed them there, which undermines the possibility of coherent long-term strategy (this is perhaps the popular image that most of us have of the state—and certainly the one most readily encountered by, for instance, reading the daily newspapers) (Dunn 2000).

In practice, every state is a shifting amalgam of these three aspects. It follows that, despite the desires of foreign policy experts and advisers, it is much harder to see states as purely determinate actors—with clear intentions and will. The ability of states to formulate and pursue clear policies with any deftness is limited both within the domestic sphere and in the external domain.

Strategy in a Democratic Age

It is important to press further the question of the relation between India's democratic identity and the possibilities of shaping a strategy to achieve its rise. Historically, we know of only one example of a large state that has over a long span of time been able to combine a vigorous democratic identity with the pursuit of a strategy to acquire and maintain immense external power—the United States of America. (The external power

of European states was premised on their imperial and colonial identities: their transition to modern democracy in the twentieth century coincided with the decline of their external power. The Soviet and current Chinese states can claim little encounter with the friction of democracy.)

What does this augur for India? Is India's democratic identity an advantage or weakness when it comes to its quest for external power? What will the greater opening of the Indian state to democratic pressures mean for the conduct of state policy at the international level?

Since the 1990s, the Indian state has been subject to intensifying democratic pressures. Increasing electoral competition has brought a greater diversity of social backgrounds into elected office; demands to make government more 'representative' through quotas and reservations have changed the character of public institutions; and the rise of social movements, extra-party political dissent, and also violent groups—who exploit the dysfunctionality of the state across many parts of the country—have all placed more demands on the state's capacity and will to be responsive.

These developments internal to India's democracy complicate the view of the Indian state as a unified rational actor—even as it increases the need for it to act as one (cf. Kaviraj 2008). This raises the question: can a relatively new democratic state like India's which has to exist and prosper in a hostile neighbourhood manage to concentrate its will to the degree required to achieve long-term goals—and what are the costs to democracy of such concentration of political will?

As one might expect, the rising salience of electoral politics and competition in India's national and federal state systems are at best viewed with ambivalence by those who see India's rise as driven by the pursuit of reason of state interests or by market economics. Whether from the point of view of realist interpretations of international relations, or from the viewpoint of economic theories of globalization and the convergence of markets, elections appear at best as domestic distractions and at worst as threats to the task, variously, of pursuing state interests or the business of smoothing the progress of the market. For realists, such interests and reasons of state are usually unknowable and unavailable to the citizen body at large—and must be kept that way. State interests are best pursued with due discretion if not in utter secrecy, by the custodians of state power, acting for the security and benefit of their people at large. For adepts and technocrats of the market, as also for idealists of other kinds who stress moral norms and values, the electoral choices of particular citizen bodies can equally be misguided—seeking (as they might choose to) to stem the expansion of global markets, or revealing their unconcern for values and norms that, were they only sufficiently enlightened, they might appreciate as in their best interests.

The relationship between elections held within the boundaries of national states and the realm of international politics presents two contrasting perspectives. In the first, the outcomes of electoral choice can be viewed as particular assertions of autonomy, one of the few remaining means available to a citizenry of expressing national sovereignty and defiance in a world where state actions are constrained by processes that escape their individual control. In the second, elections are seen as mechanisms of normalization,

designed to bring difficult and obstreperous regimes into line with the requirements of those who set the terms of international politics. Are elections, then, mechanisms through which national societies gradually learn how to identify and pursue their own best interests, especially through markets, thereby producing a convergence towards common habits of production, exchange and consumption—as well political norms? Or are elections better seen as expressive of civilizational, religious, and cultural identities, and as such, as means to insert more surprise and unpredictability into the international realm? India's own views of its future rise—and of what exactly might be at stake in any such rise—will in large part depend on which of these answers has predominance.

The late twentieth-century collapse of communist ideology encouraged some to announce the triumph of an historically unchallengeable political model: the extension of democracy and markets across the world was construed as a directional process, which would ultimately lessen levels of international conflict (cf. Ikenberry 2011; Mahbubhani 2013). Yet, if democracy is a way of reducing the impersonality of the modern state by linking it more closely to local, felt preferences and persons, and if democracy today commands such widespread favour because it promises to infuse more fully the beliefs of particular peoples into the political process, then it may be a serious mistake to imagine that its extension will result in convergence in shared beliefs. As more states adopt forms of democratic legitimation, the practice of elections will force into the crowded space of international politics more imaginative aspirations—more conceptions of how the world should be, driven by more widely distributed capacities devoted to realizing these conceptions. And as democracy disperses the capacity for agency within and across states, political hazards will increase, not diminish.

Conclusions

The levels of external hazard faced by India in particular can be expected to increase in coming decades. Given India's location in a volatile region, and given little likely alteration to neighbouring Pakistan's current predicament and trajectory, it can expect to face externally induced crises on a regular basis. As it seeks to secure its growing external interests, and to advance them wherever possible, it will need to design its foreign policy architecture with such vulnerabilities in mind. The extent to which it can deal with crises—whether security-related, humanitarian, financial, or ecological in character—will significantly determine its capacity to act and influence outcomes beyond its borders.

Risks are also embedded in the model of energy use that underpins India's growth (see Noronha, this volume). There is, first, the issue of whether it can maintain access to external energy sources: whether it will be able to keep these flows open and accessible, and negotiate volatilities in supply and price. This becomes an urgent matter given the accelerating disinvestment of the United States and other developed economies in the geopolitics of the Middle East, as a result of the emergence of new energy sources within

the direct control of the developed economies. Second, risks abound in the ecological effects of India's current energy model.

But the most determinate challenge that India faces is posed by China's remarkable rise to the status of a major world power, second only to the United States. China's rise is a signal example of strategic coordination. It is particularly significant for India not just because the two countries share one of the longest—and still disputed—physical borders in the world, but also because China's global ambitions affect India's interests in every geoeconomic and geopolitical sphere—from access to natural resources and maritime control to international finance, and ecological degradation. For the foreseeable future, therefore, the single largest conundrum facing India's policy elites will turn on whether India can maintain a policy of positive engagement with China where interests may converge, while also acquiring the capacities to check China from overriding Indian interests. That will require strategic judgement, diplomatic capacity and skills, infrastructure and technological capabilities, as well as an ability to communicate the virtues of nuance and indirection to a sometimes fervid Indian public opinion. It will require discerning once again, though now in changed circumstances, how power asymmetries can be turned to Indian advantage.

It follows that the foundations of India's strategy will need in the first instance to be based on powers and capacities to reduce and contain risk: to consolidate a form of preventative or aversive power as opposed to interventionist power (which the West would like India to develop in order to relieve them of some of their own legacy obligations on distant shores and to buttress their own shrinking international intervention capacities).

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Each of the existing perspectives on India's rise that I have outlined above contain their own limitations and vulnerabilities. Whether rooted in the vicissitudes of individual vision and judgement, in a faith in economistic solutions, or in a prudent disregard of democratic pressures on the formation of legitimate state interests, none of the perspectives on its own provides a reliable basis for a strategy to guide India's ambitions to increase its global power and stature.

For all the talk of India as a 'rising', 'emerging', or 'potential superpower', the fact is that there will be real limits to the nature and scale of wealth and military power India can hope to acquire in coming years. Figuring for itself the nature and essential characteristics of power in the twenty-first century will thus be particularly relevant for India. An important component of such power will likely be an ability to judge—as far in advance as possible—where risks lie; what, exactly is at risk; and how to balance such risks against desired goals. That will require being able to concentrate on judgement about the future, even while registering the citizenry's present demands and preferences—itself a complex skill of political leadership. Probabilistic reasoning, counterfactual logic: these will be helpful, but the pursuit of an Indian 'grand strategy', emulative of those proclaimed by other nations will be less so. India will need counsels of prudence: which both draw from careful reflection on India's own historical experience and judge shrewdly future predicaments. Foreign policy is perpetually at risk when it comes to identifying which interests to pursue: precisely because

short-term trends and temporally proximate events can skew our understanding (Sunstein 2009; and cf. successive predictions about new rising powers: van Wolferen 1989; Jacques 2009).

In confronting such challenges, what are the resources available today for thinking about the future, which can also orient present choices? In past history, two main sources provided such orientation: religion and religious belief; and political ideologies—whether of national destiny, liberal progressivism, or communist utopia—which could provide a conception of the future that guided present actions. Today, two horizons are regularly invoked by political and scientific elites in order to try to get polities to concentrate minds towards the future: the dangers of fiscal deficits, and of climate change. Both have direct foreign policy implications: regarding models of economic growth (export-oriented as opposed to reliant on imports), energy use, consumption habits, and willingness to share technology and cost burdens.

The ability to focus on the future is an integral part of trying to meet the abiding challenge for a large-scale democracy: how to create and sustain unitary will and a capacity for decisive executive action, while still maintaining legitimacy in the eyes of the citizenry subject to the effects of that will and action. America's unique achievement in this regard has been premised on its ability to sustain economic dynamism. No other democracy in human history has been so effective in combining unitary will, domestic legitimacy, and economic dynamism.

Today, India is the only country in the world that has the potential to catch up with China and possibly even surpass it. India is also, apart from the United States, the only other extant functioning large-scale democracy. America's democratic identity has played a significant ideological role in driving its global ambitions; but what causal role has it actually played in America's acquisition of global power? Alexander Hamilton, the most sophisticated American exponent of realpolitik, urged his countrymen in the early years of the republic: one hand, not many voices. The history of his country ever since has been a struggle between these two impulses: multiplicity of democratic voice, singularity of executive control—and it remains obscure to what degree it is democracy itself that can explain American success, whether economic or in terms of global power. Yet the claim to stewardship of democracy—deference to many voices—has served America well both in domestic and international advocacy of its entitlement to global power. In India's case, the idea of democracy is unlikely to become an ideological banner that it will seek promote abroad (Mehta 2011). Yet the workings of India's democracy, the interests it brings into public acknowledgement, will undoubtedly define the content of India's foreign policy, shape India's conceptions of external power, and—as importantly—shape too external conceptions of India's claims to power. To what extent those interests can be filtered, ranked, and incorporated into balanced judgement about the country's future possibilities and risks, and to what degree that resulting strategic vision can sustain itself in the face of unexpected crises, will determine the outcome of India's historical search for wealth and power in the new century.

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CHAPTER 50

RISING OR CONSTRAINED POWER?

E. SRIDHARAN

What Kind of Power Will India Be?

India's foreign policy can be usefully divided into three broad phases. The first phase, 1947–62 or the 'Nehruvian' or immediate post-independence phase was one of India finding its feet in a Cold War world, including the invention of non-alignment. The second or extended Nehruvian phase as it might be called, of 1962–91, consisted of non-alignment and a heavily state-regulated mixed economy in a Cold War world but one in which India was tied down by regional conflicts and slow growth. Overall, 1962–91 was characterized by India's search for security in the South Asian region, a middle power role, a Third World and Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) role, a pro-Soviet tilt from 1971, and marginalization in the world economy. The third and current phase since 1991 has been characterized by gradual economic liberalization and a higher trend rate of growth, the gradual building up of capabilities, a search for security and new relationships, especially improvement with United States in the twenty-first century.

India liberalized its economy very gradually since 1985 under Rajiv Gandhi, and more decisively since 1991 and entered a period of higher growth than the world average. The start of this phase coincided with a new phase in foreign policy with the end of the Cold War and the break-up of the Soviet Union over 1989–91, the emergence of the United States as the sole superpower, the emergence of minority and/or coalition governments in India in which no single party won a majority in the Lok Sabha over the seven elections from 1989 to 2009, until the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) single-party majority in 2014, and a new phase of heightened tensions with Pakistan over a renewed separatist movement in Kashmir that was dormant from 1972–89. India's economic liberalization and higher growth rate globalized its economy over the past quarter of a century, raising its level of integration with the globalizing world economy, taking its trade/GDP ratio from 15 per cent before 1991 to 43 per cent since 2013, 55 per cent if services trade is

included, and with a much larger absolute and relative presence of foreign investment, plus a significant degree of foreign investment by Indian firms and a significant inflow of remittances from Indians based abroad.[1] In 1998, India carried out five nuclear tests, the second time it tested after 1974.

Over 2004–14 under the Congress Party-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government of Manmohan Singh, India enjoyed the highest average growth rate it had ever experienced over any ten years since independence. Before the recent slowdown of 2011–14, there was much loose talk among India's elite and in sections of the global media of India as a rising or emerging power, and even (recklessly) an emerging superpower (Cohen 2001; Nayar and Paul 2003; Malone 2011, for scholarly assessments). Is the emergence of India, with the world's second largest population, projected to overtake China's in the next few decades at current rates of growth, as one of the great powers of the world system a realistic possibility? This would require the revival and sustenance of high rates of economic growth as a necessary condition, but even if that were to happen, is India as a great power a realistic prospect? What are the obstacles to such emergence other than growth itself? In other words, is growth, even assuming its revival and sustenance at a high rate, a sufficient condition? Are there India-specific factors that might impede the conversion of economic power and nuclear capability into true great power capabilities? This chapter will discuss these issues with a focus on the factors facilitating or impeding the conversion of economic and nuclear capabilities into regional, extra-regional, and global influence and power.

This chapter is divided into four sections. The next section discusses India's power ingredients and relevant characteristics. The third section discusses whether India is a regional power, and focuses on the problems of conversion of economic and nuclear capabilities into meaningful power. The fourth and last section discusses India's foreign policy options in the light of its constraints and three possible scenarios for what kind of power India might be in the future.

India's Power Ingredients and Relevant Characteristics

In this section, we do a stocktaking of the ingredients of India's nuclear, military, economic, and other forms of power, and place it in the context of the world power structure as a prelude to discussing whether India is a regional power and what prospects it has of converting economic power, even if we assume the revival of sustained high growth, and nuclear and conventional military power, into meaningful power in terms of regional, extra-regional, and global influence.

First, India is a small nuclear power with an arsenal of about 90–110 warheads. India has conducted tests on an estimated 12–15 kiloton fission device twice (in 1974 and 1998), and three subcritical fission devices and a claimed thermonuclear (fusion) device (in

1998), the last's success being doubted by former top scientists.[2] Its missile range, though expanded with the Agni-5 test, is limited to an intermediate-range ballistic missile (IRBM) range (3,000 miles), which gives it at best a limited deterrent capability against neighbouring China but not against potential blackmail by more distant nuclear powers, making it vulnerable to a first strike by nuclear powers other than China; even deterrence against the latter is doubtful.

What role does nuclear capability play in overall power in today's world? Clearly, while nuclear capability is not usable and cannot be brandished as a threat, and nuclear weapons are weapons of deterrence not compellence, there is nevertheless a link between nuclear capability on the one hand and power projection/compellent capabilities in the regional and extended regional context on the other. Nuclear capability can act as a shield that enables conventional and sub-conventional warfare and power projection by deterring robust conventional counter-action by other powers. This is demonstrated by Pakistan, which has successfully exploited its nuclear capability to deter counter-action against its sub-conventional adventurism using non-state actors both against India and in Afghanistan, and most recently by Russia in its armed and sub-conventional interventions in Georgia (2008) and Ukraine (2014) respectively. Israel's undeclared nuclear capability has for decades enabled it to project conventional power into the territories and airspaces of its regional opponents by deterring robust counter-action for fear of escalation. In India's case, nuclear capability can potentially, in a crisis, enable power projection across the Line of Control, or Line of Actual Control to the north, in response to serious provocations, thus widening the range of options, or in seas to the south. Thus, nuclear capability is not necessarily only purely deterrent/defensive in character but can enable power projection in case found necessary.

Nuclear capability can also potentially enable India, if civil nuclear cooperation agreements with major nuclear powers as with the United States in 2008, or with major nuclear suppliers, are reached, to eventually enter the world's major dual-purpose technology control regimes (Nuclear Suppliers Group, Missile Technology Control Regime in particular) as a member. It can also help in India's diplomatic quest for a larger role in global security management including reform of the UN Security Council so long as it is seen as a responsible player acting in concert with the existing major powers, regional groupings, and security regimes, by making it more difficult to ignore as well as providing an incentive to include it, for existing powers.

Second, as far as power projection capabilities go, India's naval reach has expanded considerably over the post-Cold War period to one where it sends naval missions around the Indian Ocean from the Horn of Africa to the South China and East China Seas in cooperation with regional powers and the United States. However, it is still far short of a true blue-water navy. Likewise, its air force, although comparatively large at close to a thousand combat planes, has a limited reach, and is almost entirely dependent on imported aircraft, the great majority of Soviet/Russian provenance, with over half the force consisting of largely obsolete planes.

Third, India's economy has enjoyed a high trend growth rate in the period since liberalization in 1991 and increased its share of world GDP and world trade. It is now the

world's tenth largest economy with 2.6 per cent world GDP or about an eighth of US GDP, 2 per cent of world manufacturing value-added, 2 per cent of world trade including 1.67 per cent of world merchandise exports, and 3.3 per cent of world services exports, and with a merchandise trade/GDP ratio of 43 per cent.

India's financial and fiscal health, while deteriorating significantly over 2011–14, is in much better shape than it used to be in the Cold War, when it was a slow-growing, much more aid-dependent, uncompetitive, protected economy. It has a fiscal deficit of 9 per cent of GDP and a debt/GDP ratio of 64 per cent, but its foreign exchange reserves, currently around $300 billion, have been for the past several years among the top six to eight in the world. It has since 2004 attracted significant inflows of foreign direct and portfolio investment, as well as become the world's largest recipient of remittances from nationals working abroad, $70 billion most recently or nearly 4 per cent of GDP, which has helped finance its trade deficit. Although some segments of its industry are internationally competitive, such as software and information technology-enabled services, generic pharmaceuticals, auto components, some petroleum products, garments and gems/jewellery, it is not an important industrial innovator, its R&D/GDP ratio has stagnated at less than 1 per cent since the mid-1990s, much less than developed countries or China, it has consistently run a merchandise trade deficit, and its universities perform poorly in international rankings compared even to China.

The higher trend growth rate since 2003–4 has been driven by its raised rate of domestic savings, which before the recent slump had risen to 33 per cent of GDP, with the rate of investment up to 36 per cent of GDP (though slumping to 31 per cent in 2013, still among the world's highest). Its raised international economic profile has led it to an increased share of IMF quotas, now in the eighth position, and to a prominent role in the Group of 20 (though the poorest there by per capita income) and being clubbed with Brazil, Russia, and China as one of the emerging economies to watch.

Fourth, however, India has deep structural weaknesses from a resources-for-power point of view. It has 17 per cent of the world population and one of the highest population densities, although it has still a demographic advantage due to a younger population than the world average, particularly for the major powers. Although it is largely self-sufficient in foodgrains, it could in the future become water-stressed and is vulnerable to global warming. It imports 25 per cent of total energy consumed including 80 per cent of its oil, and is heavily dependent on raw material imports, not being a major mineral producer except for coal, iron ore, and bauxite.

If one compares India with China, a nuclear great-power neighbour with whom it has border and territorial disputes and which is an ally of Pakistan, and hence a strategic rival and potential antagonist, China does far better by every indicator and is clearly in a higher league in power terms. Thus, China has a GDP of $8.3 trillion in 2012, the world's second largest, and accounting for 9 per cent of world GDP or 45 per cent of that of the United States, 18 per cent of world manufacturing value-added, almost equal to the United States, 10 per cent of world manufactured exports, and 4.5 per cent of services exports. Its financial and fiscal position is immeasurably stronger than that of India, with reserves of $3.3 trillion, a fiscal deficit of only 2.3 per cent of GDP, and a debt/GDP

ratio of only 34 per cent. It has a much larger land area for a population only somewhat more than and slower growing than India's, greater freshwater resources and foodgrain production double that of India, and much greater mineral resources although a huge net energy importer. What gives China much greater clout are its much larger share of key global economic magnitudes including trade and financial flows, which make it a system-shaping power in global economic terms unlike India to date. And despite the post-2008 slowdown, China is still growing much faster than India, well over 7 per cent. In terms of technological prowess, its universities and research institutions are more highly ranked, and its output of scientific papers and patents much higher than India's though starting from a lower base at the end of the Cold War. And its nuclear, missile, space, and conventional arms industries are much more advanced and self-sufficient than India's.

Is India a Regional Power? Constraints and Conversion Problems

From the above discussion, what can we say about what kind of power India is today? And what kind of power it might become? About whether India is a regional power, one needs to first understand the ways in which a country can be a regional power. A country can, broadly speaking, be a regional power in three ways, not mutually exclusive. First, it can be a regional power by consent, that is, it can be accepted by the countries of a region as a natural leader and spokesperson. Possible examples are South Africa in southern Africa, Saudi Arabia in the Gulf Cooperation Council, or Brazil in South America. Second, it can be a regional leader by having the power of compellence over its neighbours. Third, it can be a regional power simply by virtue of size, without necessarily being able to impose its will, that is, simply by looming larger than its neighbours by indicators of geographic, demographic, economic, and military size.

Viewed in this way, India can be called a regional power only by the third criterion, that of relative size, in South Asia. Its area, population, GDP, and military size are much larger than the rest of South Asia combined, its per capita GDP of the same order of magnitude. However, it is not accepted as the natural leader of the region except perhaps by Bhutan, certainly not by Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, or even Nepal or more recently the Maldives, all of which have resisted India's wishes or demands. Nor does it have the power of compellence over its regional antagonist Pakistan due to the latter's nuclear deterrent capability; indeed, given the enormous costs and risks, including diplomatic costs and risks, of any military attempt to impose its will on any of its smaller neighbours and their at most limited dependence on India's economy, except for Bhutan and Nepal, it is doubtful if India enjoys compellent power if it wanted to exert it, within its region given the enormous costs and risks. Hence, by the criterion of dominance, that is, compellent capability, India does not qualify as a regional power, certainly not

over Pakistan. It can only deter Pakistan, and more doubtfully deter its largest neighbour China. Hence, India can be said to have regional weight and influence but not dominance in a way that it can be considered a regional power by virtue of unchallenged dominance and the capacity to achieve its desired outcomes in the region or change the policies of its neighbours that it would like to see changed.

The constraining of India as a regional power is due to geostrategic factors, that is, India is not able to leverage its relative weight—three-quarters or more of the population and GDP of the region and largest conventional forces—due to what its neighbours have. Pakistan and China are de facto allied nuclear powers that can at best be deterred, not compelled in any way.

Hence, India is more like a middle power that is not quite a regional power. However, what of the future? If sustained 7–8 per cent growth can be revived, will India be able to graduate to regional power and eventually great power status? If this is not likely, are there blockages in India's path and problems of conversion of economic into political power? The major challenge that India faces, if it is to have the wherewithal for an enhanced international role, is to revive and sustain a growth rate of at least 7–8 per cent for the next couple of decades at least if it is to significantly raise its per capita income towards middle-income status and have a chance of abolishing poverty, not to speak of creating the industrial and technological wherewithal for bulking larger in the world economy and hence in the global configuration of power, and derivatively, in global governance. This depends on its political and institutional capacity to take forward economic reform.

Such capacity is impacted by political fragmentation among other things. The entire post-Cold War period from 1989–2014 has been characterized by minority governments at the centre, except for the second half of the Congress government of Narasimha Rao when the party gained a majority through defections. Apart from this, it was a period of minority coalition governments at the centre from 1996–2014, that were themselves dependent on outside support. The foreign policy consequences of this were most dramatically demonstrated in the left's withdrawal of support to the UPA I government following the Indo-US nuclear deal in 2008, which was salvaged by the offer of support by both the Samajwadi Party and the Bahujan Samaj Party. However, for the management of economic reform, coalition governance has a major impact due to the fact that market-oriented reforms typically tend to have a cost–benefit structure characterized by upfront political costs that fall on relatively well-organized groups (industry protected from competition, organized labour, politicians and bureaucrats with regulatory powers, and other such rent-seeking groups such as those whose subsidies might be cut) while the benefits are growth-dependent, and hence deferred, diffused, and marked by the uncertainties of the market about who the winners will be and how much they will gain. Hence, such reforms typically need strong and stable governments with long-term time horizons and not multi-party minority coalitions in turn dependent on external support in a federal polity characterized by state assembly elections every year of a five-year parliamentary term, and a bureaucracy that is not characterized by fixed-term tenures but subject to arbitrary transfers at the whims of their political masters.

Such an institutional system militates against systematic implementation of market-oriented reforms; reforms would in such a system tend to be episodic and crisis-driven. As of 2014, it is clear that a renewed boom if it is to be launched and sustained would require a fresh round of market reforms in terms of fiscal consolidation, further deregulation, and privatization including labour market reforms. Effective reform would also require improved state capacity for collecting revenues and implementing infrastructural projects in the public sector as well as in the social sectors, particularly health, education, and welfare programs, and controlling corruption. Indeed, reform-catalyzed growth is essential to generate the revenues for social sector spending for abolishing poverty and building human capital.

Will the advent of a majority government with a perceivedly strong Prime Minister in 2014 have an enabling effect on economic reform and growth revival? Although the time horizon problem may be mitigated, the structure of entrenched interests, particularly those which are not poor and have a vested interest in state subsidies of all kinds, and their interlocking with the state will pose a challenge. The BJP-led NDA government's vetoing of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement in August 2014 is an example of domestic compulsions that put it at odds with its major trading partners. The problem of market-oriented economic reform in India is that a wide range of interest groups, not only the poor, have a stake in state subsidies of one kind or another and hence in discretionary state regulation which also tends towards corruption, and which constitutes a vicious circle that is difficult to break out of while also maintaining the capacity to retain popularity and win elections. The tilting of the balance from potential losers to winners in market-oriented reforms and the growth they generate and hence towards reconfiguration of the coalition of dominant interests towards a more pro-market equilibrium will be a slow process.

An additional complication that might arise from the emergence of a BJP majority government in 2014, depending on how events play out, is that religious divisions in India might be intensified by the actions of its footsoldiers and ideologues, leading to social strife of a kind and degree that negatively impacts investment and growth, as well as negatively impacts how India is viewed by Pakistan, Bangladesh, and in the Middle East, as well as how India's democracy is viewed by Western powers and public opinion, in ways that worsen the prospects of peace-building in the region as well as worsen the prospects of India being seen and accepted as a net security provider and security partner by major powers. While it is too early to say anything on these risks, they need to be taken seriously and can have the effect of a net diminution in India's prospects as an emerging power besides possibly irreparable consequences for its unity and stability.

Furthermore, an enhanced role in global governance as an emerging power would require a major augmentation of India's intellectual and institutional resources in foreign policy and defence. India has a very small foreign service for its size, less than a thousand Indian Foreign Service officers, as noted by Shashi Tharoor (Tharoor 2012), former Minister of State for External Affairs, as well as a very limited pool of expertise on foreign affairs, area/country studies, and international security, besides international economic and financial matters, largely concentrated in one university (Jawaharlal

Nehru University) and a few think-tanks based in Delhi, besides the community of retired diplomats and military officers. Media coverage of international affairs is limited in scope and depth and heavily dependent on the international media. This represents a very small pool of talent compared to the intellectual and institutional resources developed and deployed by not only China but other emerging powers. India would also need to reform its higher defence organization for inter-service coordination in operations as well as for long-term planning, arms acquisitions, and capability-building in a constantly changing technological environment.

If the Indian economy, down to below 5 per cent growth rate for the past two years (2012–13 and 2013–14) can be put back on a high growth path of 7–8 per cent, something perfectly possible given the appropriate economic reforms and the high savings and investment rates of around 30–5 per cent of GDP, and a largely young population, then India's share of world GDP, trade, and financial flows will increase and it will gain greater weight in the world. In a virtuous circle, it might become a strategic market for international companies in the sense of a market in which no major international company could afford not to have a presence. In military terms, its missile and naval reach will inexorably increase given the appropriate planning and investments. Could such a high-growth scenario push India to become a regional power in the sense of dominance and/or acceptance by its neighbours as the natural leader of the region? And could it eventually gain weight enough to become a system-shaping power extra-regionally in the Indian Ocean and Asia as a whole even if not globally in, say, a couple of decades?

I would argue that it would still be very difficult for India to become a regional power in the sense of dominance let alone an extra-regional power in a strategic sense. India would face what I would like to call a conversion problem—the problem of converting either economic or nuclear capabilities into meaningful regional or extra-regional power.

Many economists, for example the celebrants of the emerging economies, tend to linearly project economic trends, ignoring geographic and military capabilities and their ingredients, and tend to assume that economic weight converts smoothly into power (Virmani 2011, for example). While this might be true above certain thresholds in the economic sphere, one needs to distinguish between weight, influence, and power in the hard sense of compellence or the ability to achieve desired geopolitical outcomes including inducing others to change their policies in a more favourable direction. Different countries have different abilities to convert economic and nuclear capabilities into meaningful international political power depending on the geographic and geostrategic constraints they are faced with.

Important examples of such conversion problems are Russia, Japan, and even contemporary China. Russia, despite having the second largest nuclear arsenal and global strike capabilities finds it difficult to convert such a capability into meaningful influence even in its near-abroad, and appears to have been forced into a purely defensive deterrent mould (barring exceptional developments such as Georgia, 2008). This is because its economy and military technological base cannot support a conventional power projection capability like the former Soviet Union and because of the post-Cold

War expansion of NATO to its borders. Likewise, Japan, for most of the Cold War and post-Cold War period, could not, even if it wanted to, convert its massive economic power, with the second largest economy until recently, into meaningful political influence outside the strictly economic sphere, even in its neighbourhood. It faced the geographical constraints of being a resource-poor island dependent on imports and having two nuclear neighbours in Russia and China. Strategically speaking, it has been a defensive power. Even China, despite emerging as the world's second largest and system shaping economy and having a global nuclear strike capability faces the geostrategic constraints of a US presence off its shores and US allies such as Japan, South Korea, and de facto Taiwan, and a limited power projection capability. All three powers are examples of conversion problems whereby they enjoy less political power and are more defensive, deterrent powers than could be expected from their nuclear and/or economic capabilities.

Both types of conversion problems—economic even if high growth is achieved, and nuclear—apply to India too. India is strategically blocked along its entire continental north by nuclear Pakistan and China. Such a blockage not only reduces it to a purely deterrent posture that is not capable of deterring even the systematic use of terror by non-state actors but also pre-empts resources for military modernization by the weight of the army (50 per cent) in defence budget when air and naval forces are forces of the future. And to the south, the vast expanse of the waters around India prevents the development of power projection capabilities of a kind that would count in the global strategic calculations of the major powers, not to speak of the constraints imposed by the presence of US and other great powers in Indian Ocean. Hence, India can be seen as a purely defensive power with a limited nuclear deterrent capability, and no real power projection capability; in effect, a contained power that will find it very difficult to overcome these constraints even with sustained high growth revived and greater missile and naval reach. The latter types of reach will have to achieve a quantum jump to count in the extra-regional and global strategic sphere.

The possible way out these conversion problems and overcoming of blockages is to strengthen its capabilities by building partnerships with other major powers in the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions, particularly with the United States and its allies, Japan, Australia, Singapore, and other South-East Asian and possibly Gulf states. What this would require is a shift in mindset from strategic autonomy and non-alignment to positive engagement based on being seen as a net security provider from the point of view of partners, and a willingness to go beyond arm's-length engagement like military/naval exercises to more institutionalized forms of engagement including joint military action in specified circumstances. Such commitments might open the door to technology transfer and building indigenous arms production and exports by military co-production and R&D, which would over the long term strengthen India's power capabilities.

India's overall constraints of the 1991–2014 period can be summed up as follows. It is heavily dependent on energy and resource imports, not to speak of a weak manufacturing and technological base. Specifically, it is an arms importer heavily dependent on

external suppliers for all major platforms—combat aircraft, surface ships, submarines, tanks and artillery, not to speak of electronic force multipliers—despite joint development efforts with Russia and Israel; China is much more technologically self-reliant. A serious effort to modernize its military industry and move away from the dubious distinction of the being the world's largest arms importer in several recent years, would require not only foreign investment in its defence industry for transfer of technology but also a major effort to absorb and indigenize such technologies and build upon them by local R&D, something that has not been successfully accomplished so far unlike other emerging powers in the past two decades like Israel, Brazil, Taiwan, and South Africa, for example. This reorientation of the defence production industry would in turn require precisely the willingness and capability, if technology transfers are to be incentivized, to meaningfully cooperate as a security partner in the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions with the United States, Japan, and other powers in addition to existing cooperation with Russia, and to maintain a line open to China based on economic engagement. Lastly, it has a qualitatively and quantitatively limited nuclear arsenal, delivery systems, and power projection capability, and is constrained geostrategically by Pakistan and China to the north and the ocean to the south.

These constraints and the attendant conversion problems are likely to continue, and if they do India cannot dominate its region or obtain a consensual leadership role. A major effort, which requires a change in mindset besides institutional capacities, will be required to improve relations with Pakistan and China, particularly the latter, to incentivize an acceptance of a significant security role in the region and the larger Asia-Pacific, even while building a relationship with the United States, Japan, and Australia besides South-East Asian countries, something that will require a calibrated set of policies but above all be dependent on faster growth and bulking larger in the trade and investment profiles of all partners, which in turn depends on domestic reforms and institutional capacities.

India's Options, Three Scenarios, and Most Likely Outcome

Hence, India is not a regional power in the sense of dominance and unlikely to become a great power due to conversion problems even if sustained high growth is realized, except perhaps in a purely economic sense in the very distant future if its magnitudes become system shaping.

However, India has good prospects of building itself up as an important coalitional and bridging power as Sunil Khilnani has argued (Khilnani 2005). India can potentially leverage its soft power that derives from being a successful, socially diverse, secular, federal democracy and its current non-threatening 'good citizen' status to become an exemplar and promoter of democracy, human rights, and their subsets minority rights

and autonomy for minority regions—an ideological model and a promoter of regional cooperation in South and larger Asia on this basis. In addition, due to these characteristics and shared interests and cultural overlaps with both the North and the South it can potentially be an attractive coalition partner on a range of international economic, Asian regional including regional security, conflict resolution and environmental issues, for example, for both North and South, and can carve out a role as a bridging power between North and South, even between the United States and China, and the United States and the Islamic world. India already has wide-ranging naval cooperation with a range of powers involving port calls and naval exercises from the Gulf to South-East and East Asia, involving the United States, other Western powers, Japan, Australia, and Russia, as well as military industrial and military R&D cooperation with Russia, Israel, France, and other countries based on common interests. As its economy grows it can play a larger role in international and Asian regional institutions.

However, as of now, it is still hesitant to partner with the West in promoting democracy and human rights, as these are seen by several countries including Russia, China, and some Middle Eastern states as aimed at regime change for geopolitical reasons. It is a sovereignty hawk on human rights and international intervention at least partly because it faces armed separatist movements in four states (Kashmir, Nagaland, Manipur, and Assam) and is engaged in counter-insurgency in these against extreme left insurgencies in a large swathe of central India. A more confident India, however, with appropriate ideological and political recasting of positions and leveraging of strengths instead of being afraid of criticism of weaknesses, can potentially emerge as a advocate of its own accommodative form of democracy as a model for societies with religious, ethnic, linguistic, and regional diversity. Even on counter-insurgency it can be pointed out that India is qualitatively different in that it does not, after the late 1960s, engage in either demographic change on an ethnic basis (or state-sponsored ethnic cleansing or flooding) or aerial bombing as a part of counter-insurgency operations unlike Pakistan, Sri Lanka, or the Western powers in Afghanistan or Iraq. India can arguably develop considerable soft power in promoting a specifically Indian model of democracy in addition to playing a classic middle power role as a coalitional and bridging power. This can gel with a role as a regional security partner in the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean.

From the foregoing discussion, we can anticipate three possible scenarios for the future as far as what kind of power India will/can/might become.

First, with sustained rapid growth, if such can be revived and maintained, and if bandwagoning towards itself is induced in the region through economic openness and incentives, and if extra-regional influence is garnered by economic engagement, then barring Pakistan, India can become a regional power in South Asia by consensus and a valued partner in South-East and West Asia and by the West.

Second, an identical scenario as above but without successfully inducing bandwagoning by India's smaller neighbours would leave India in the same status as a middle power and a regional power only by size, without either consensual leadership or dominance, but with extra-regional influence for economic reasons. This would in fact make it somewhat like China which has confrontational relations with most of its major

neighbours despite its economic and military power, but considerable extra-regional and global influence due to its economic power.

Third, if India is limited to slow to medium growth of, say, 5–7 per cent, no bandwagoning is induced and its extra-regional influence remains limited; it will remain a middle power with limitations.

The most likely outcome over the next decade, one would speculate, is that in terms of weight, influence, and power, India would gain greater weight in the world due to faster-than-average growth but less than commensurate influence due to the conversion problems and blockages discussed earlier (lack of energy and resources, arms import dependence, and being blocked towards the North and having no bases and no power projection capabilities overseas besides having super/great powers as de facto naval neighbours) in becoming a regional power/hegemon. However, it should be able to be an effective coalitional partner for a quite diverse range of countries and play a bridging role as well as be one possible model of democracy. Hence, India will probably be a rising but constrained power.

Notes

1. See Ministry of Finance, *Economic Survey*; Reserve Bank of India; World Bank; International Monetary Fund; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD); and Indexmundi website for all Indian and comparative economic data in this chapter).
2. See SIPRI and <http://www.globalfirepower.com> for all Indian and comparative military data in this chapter.

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Personal remittances as per cent of GDP: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TRF.PWKR.DT.GD.ZS>.

Total reserves (includes gold): <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/FI.RES.TOTL.CD>.

Military expenditure as percentage of GDP (original source: SIPRI): <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/MS.MIL.XPND.GD.ZS>.

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GDP per capita: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD>.

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